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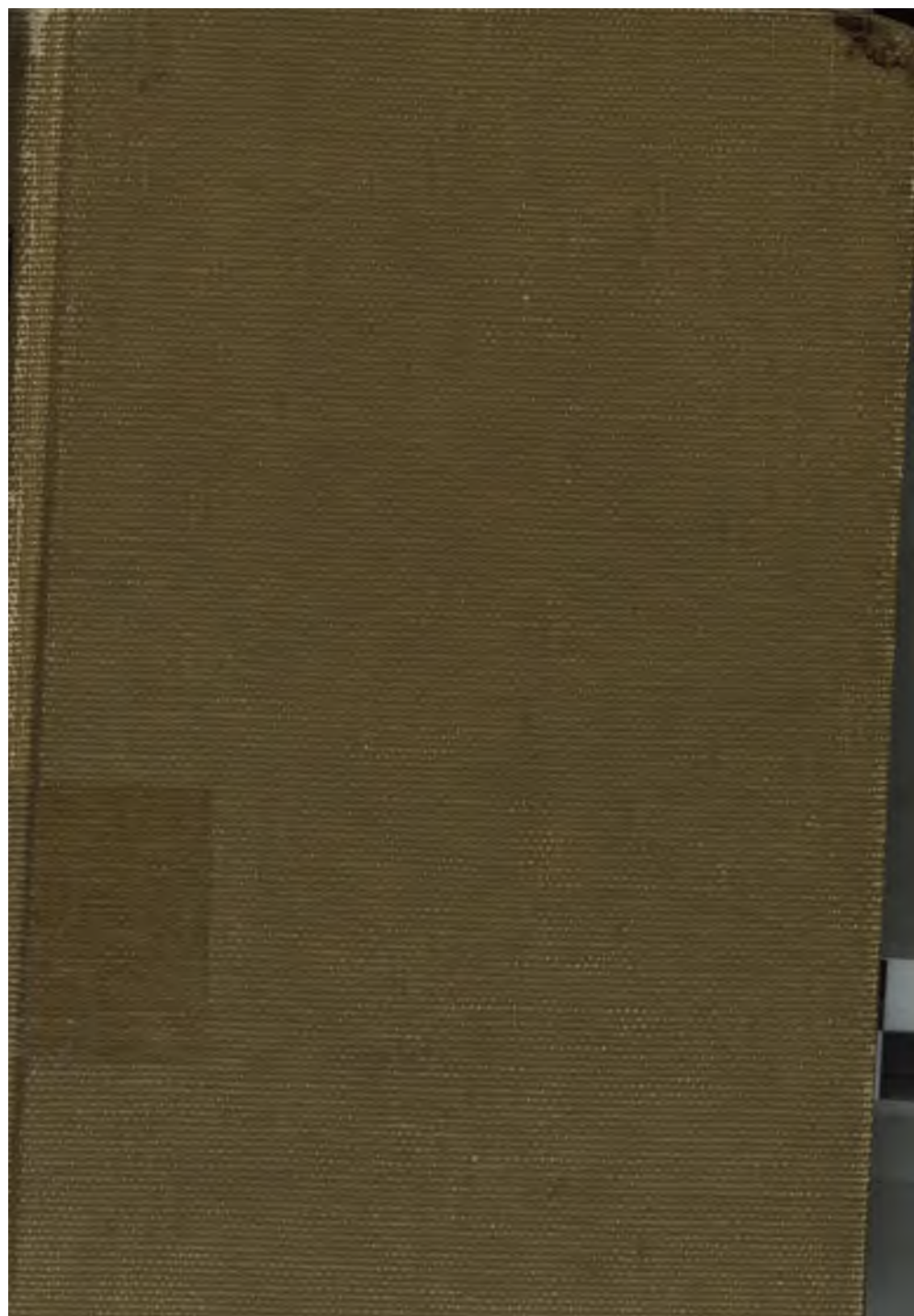
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THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES
OF
LAZARILLO DE TORMES

THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES
OF
GUZMAN D'ALFARACHE

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MENDOZA—MATEO ALEMAN

THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES
OF
LAZARILLO DE TORMES

*TRANSLATED FROM THE SPANISH OF
DON DIEGO HURTADO DE MENDOZA*

By THOMAS ROSCOE

THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES
OF
GUZMAN D'ALFARACHE

OR
THE SPANISH ROGUE

By MATEO ALEMAN

FROM THE FRENCH EDITION OF LE SAGE

By JOHN HENRY BRADY

With Eight Original Etchings by R. de Los Rios

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THE LIFE OF GUZMAN D'ALFARACHE.

CHAPTER XXI.

*WHAT BECOMES OF GUZMAN AFTER HAVING LEFT
GENOA.*

I TRAVELLED some distance from Genoa, without so much as turning my head once towards that city, as though I feared that the sight of it would have petrified me. I resembled one of those who escaped from the battle of Roncesvalles; I walked on without having any determined route, though it was my wish to go to Rome. At length I reached a town about ten miles from Genoa, where I stopped some hours to rest myself, and spent what remained of my pistole. Then, resigning myself entirely into the hands of Providence, I resumed my journey.

It was well for me that I had been accustomed to misfortunes, and that I had already made some progress in the art of begging. What would have become of me without this resource? I should have been much to be pitied. Any one that possesses the talent of exciting his neighbour's charity may travel all over Italy without money. I must render this

justice to Italy, that no nation in the world has more charity in it,—in proof of which assertion I reached Rome without spending a single sous of all the money that I was able to collect on the road, and which I carefully reserved. In the different villages through which I passed I had more meat and bread given me than I could possibly consume. Mendicity in that country is a fine resource for persons of spirit in bad circumstances who cannot make up their minds to be industrious. For my own part, I was so naturally inclined to that trade that I wished for no better. I must confess that when I found myself in the capital of the Catholic World, with money enough in my pocket to buy a new suit of clothes, I was at first somewhat tempted to employ it in that way, with a design to offer my services to some nobleman; but I had courage enough to resist this desire, which I considered in no other light than as a temptation of the devil.

“Oh! oh! Guzman,” said I to myself, “do you wish to give yourself the same airs here as at Toledo? Suppose, when you have expended all your little hoard in dress, you should be so unlucky as to find no one willing to employ you, who do you think will feed you, my friend? Do you imagine that a fine new coat is likely to excite charity? Undeceive yourself. You will be more likely to fare better in your present dress. Be wise and rather endeavour to profit by your old follies than to seek after new ones. Be contented as you are, and do not resume your former vanities.”

Reasoning with myself in this manner, I tied up my purse with a double knot, and addressing myself to the money within it, "Remain thus secure," said I, "until I find a better opportunity of making thee useful."

I began then to traverse the streets of Rome in my rags, soliciting alms like one who believed himself a master in the art, but who was in reality a mere apprentice in comparison with the professors of that country. Among these was a young fellow, who, remarking the manner of begging that I adopted, found that I required a few lessons, which he was kind enough to give me. We associated together; and, to render me useful to the society, he taught me the different manners and the several tones in which alms should be asked of different people, and that the same speech would not always do. "Men," said he, "are not in the least affected by the plaintive and lamentable tones adopted by most beggars. They will be much more likely to put their hands in their pockets when you implore their assistance boldly for God's sake. As for women," continued he, "as some pay their devotions to the Holy Virgin, and others to our Lady of the Rosary, it is by one of these that we wheedle them. It has frequently a good effect also to pray that they may be preserved from all mortal sin, from false witnesses, the power of traitors, and from slanderous tongues; such wishes as these, pronounced in energetic terms, and in an impressive tone of voice, will almost always make their purses fly open to assist you."

He taught me, moreover, how to excite the compassion of the rich, and, what is still more difficult, of professed devotees. In a word, he gave me such good instructions, and I made so good a use of them, that I soon received more money than I could spend. I was already perfectly acquainted with Rome, from the Pope down to the very lowest scullion in the city. For fear of troubling my customers too often, I divided the city into seven parts, allotting one for every day in the week. I never failed to present myself at the several churches on holidays, where I was sure to pick up something. As to the pieces of bread that were usually given at doors of private houses, I sold what I did not want to distressed objects who were ashamed to beg, but who, by being relieved in private by the faithful, were well able to pay for what they bought of me. Country people and others, who made it their business to fatten fowls and hogs, were also frequent purchasers; but the spicecake makers were my best customers. I likewise made something considerable by the old rags which were given me by charitable persons, who could not without pity see a lad of my age almost naked, especially in winter.

Having by this time become acquainted with the first professors in the art of begging, I was now perfect master of the trade by following their directions and example. It happened one day that about thirty of our fraternity were collected before the door of the ambassador of France, when I heard one of my comrades behind me cry, "Look at that Spanish glutton there, he'll certainly spoil our trade. When once

q. va desde artista hasta humilde
e se mantene seguro dentro de seu mundo
cambiante (circulo), es decir seguro de
inseguridad

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he is well filled with the soup or meat that is given him, he declines taking any more; this it is that ruins our business. By these means people will be apt to think that poor people like us have too much given them." One of our veterans, who knew me, overhearing this, said to the beggar who uttered this complaint, "Peace, comrade, do you not see that this novice is a stranger who is not yet acquainted with our regulations? Leave him to me and I will undertake to instruct him. He is a pretty apt scholar, I assure you, and will in a very short time be a match for any of us."

After having thus taken my part, he called me aside in a low voice and asked me several questions, as, in what part of Spain I was born? what was my name? and how long I had been at Rome? When I had answered all these queries in a very laconic style, he proceeded to represent to me, but in a very mild manner, the mutual feeling that beggars were bound to observe towards each other, that a proper decorum might be supported among them; that they ought to be so united as to play into each other's hands like brother pickpockets in a fair. From thence entering into a long detail, he revealed so many secrets to me as soon convinced me how inferior I was to these great men. Amongst other things which I had never yet heard of, he taught me how to enlarge my stomach, so as to be able to eat four times as much as usual without incommoding myself, not forgetting to recommend me never to eat before people without affecting extreme greediness, for he

assured me it was most essential to persuade them that beggars are dying with hunger. He concluded by informing me at what hours I should be sure to be at such and such places; that in some houses I might venture to enter the kitchen, and even as far as the parlour; but that in others I must not dare to enter the door.

I now thought that he had completely exhausted the subject, but all these things were nothing in comparison with the begging-laws, which he made me read at his own house, whither he led me as soon as the alms of the French ambassador were distributed. He did not content himself by allowing me merely to read these admirable regulations, but insisted on my taking a copy of them, that by being well acquainted with them I might never again infringe them in so shameful a manner. I have not thought myself bound, friendly reader, to withhold these statutes, which I shall communicate to you as they were presented to me. If there be any who have no wish to have the manners of low life depicted to them, is it just that I should accommodate myself to their excessive delicacy, and withdraw a picture which may afford much pleasure to others?

CHAPTER XXII.

THE LAWS OF BEGGING.

As beggars of every nation are distinguished from each other by their different modes of imploring alms; as the Germans beg by singing and in troops, the French by their praying, the Flemings by their respectful bowings, the Bohemians by fortune-telling, the Portuguese by their crying, the Italians by long harangues, the English by abusing, and the Spaniards by their haughty growlings, we hereby command them all to observe the following statutes, under pain of our heavy displeasure:—

1. We forbid any lame or wounded beggar, of whatever nation he be, to appear in the quarters frequented by others full of health and vigour, on account of the advantage they will have over the latter. We also ordain that all such as are in perfect health form no manner of connection with blind men, field preachers, mountebanks, poets, musicians, redeemed captives, nor even with old soldiers that have escaped from a rout, or seamen saved from a shipwreck. For although it is generally allowed that all these must subsist by imploring charity, their manners of begging being different, it is necessary that each society keep to its own particular rules.

2. We ordain that beggars have certain taverns

assigned them in every country, where shall preside three or four of their ancients with staves in their hands as emblems of their authority; which said ancients are hereby empowered to canvass, in the aforesaid taverns, all the affairs of the world, and to give their opinions as freely as they please. At the same time, we permit the other beggars to relate their own heroic exploits, as well as those of their ancestors, and even to illustrate the conversation by boasting of battles they were never in.

3. We command that every beggar carry a good cudgel in his hand, with a spike at the end of it if possible, to be provided against emergencies, lest they repent of their neglect.

4. That each beggar take especial care never to presume to wear anything new; that all his clothes be worn out, torn, or patched, nothing bringing more scandal on our profession than begging in good clothes. Be it, however, well understood, that if, in the exercise of his professional duties, a beggar chance to obtain some new garment, he is at liberty to deck himself out in it for that day, but no longer. We positively will and command that he dispose of it the following morning.

5. To prevent any dispute that may arise between comrades for certain posts, we ordain that the more ancient possessor prevail and take precedence, without regard to persons.

6. It is permitted that two infirm or sick persons beg in company, if they please, and call each other brothers, provided they beg by turns and in a different

tone, the one beginning where the other leaves off. They are to keep opposite each other on different sides of the street, each singing his own misfortunes; they may afterwards divide their profits as they please.

7. It is permitted that a beggar wear an old dish-clout round his head in winter instead of a bonnet, that while he is protected from the cold he may at the same time appear an invalid. He is likewise at liberty to walk with crutches, or to have one leg tied up behind him.

8. Every beggar may have a purse and a pocket, but must receive alms in their hats only.

9. We command that no beggar be so indiscreet as to divulge any of the mysteries of our trade to any but such as belong to our society.

10. Should any beggar be so fortunate as to discover any new trick in the art of begging, he shall be obliged to communicate the same to the company, which ought to enjoy in common the benefit arising from the genius of any of its members. As a recompense, however, to the inventor, and to stimulate his genius to new discoveries, we decree that he have an exclusive privilege to make the most of his device for three months, during which time we peremptorily forbid any other belonging to our fraternity from interfering with his practice, under pain of confiscating to his use all the profits that may be derived therefrom.

11. We exhort the members of this society, freely and faithfully, to make known to each other all the houses where they know that either private or public alms are likely to be dispensed, especially those in

which gaming or courting is going forward, for in such places large receipts are certain.

12. We command that no beggar presume to keep or lead about with him any hunting, setting, or other dogs; blind men only being allowed to be conducted by a little cur with a string round its neck. This prohibition is not meant to extend to such of our fraternity as may chance to possess dogs of talent. These may be allowed to exhibit their performances as usual by making their dogs dance or jump through hoops; but they must not presume to take their station at a church door, where other beggars of the society may be assembled, on account of the great advantage they will have over them.

13. We command that no beggar venture to buy meat or fish in the market on his own account, except in a case of extreme necessity, as very ill consequences may arise from so doing.

14. We permit all such beggars as have no children of their own to hire as many as four to lead about with them into the churches on festivals; these should not be above five years old, and, if possible, should appear to be twins. If a female conduct them, she should never fail to have one always at her breast; and if a man, he must be sure to carry one on his arm, and lead the other by the hand.

15. We command that those beggars who have any children, instruct them, up to the age of six years, in the best mode of making collections in churches; that after having taught them to ask charity for their father and mother who lie on their beds at home most

dangerously ill, they allow them to go alone, though it were better not entirely to lose sight of them. As soon, however, as these children shall have attained their seventh year, we command that they be left to shift for themselves, as being already majors, and that their parents be content to restrict and compel them to return home at stipulated hours.

16. Beggars of the old stamp, who consider it a point of honour to walk in the footsteps of their ancestors who have trained them to the profession of begging, will never allow their children to take any other trade than their own, nor to degrade themselves by entering into the service of any one; and if these children wish to be thought worthy of their parents, they will hold every other condition in abhorrence.

17. Although idleness be the principal divinity worshipped by us beggars, we nevertheless think proper to prescribe certain hours of rising. Every one should dress and turn out by seven o'clock in winter, and by five in summer, or even sooner, if he feels so disposed; and should be in bed again by the same hour in the evening, except on extraordinary occasions, and according to the directions of the veterans of the society.

18. Be for ever declared infamous, and banished from our society, all such as shall presume to steal, harbour stolen goods, strip little children, or commit any such villanies.

19. As it is our wish that all young persons who embark in our profession be treated favourably, we will and ordain that, for the future, any brother who

shall have attained the age of twelve years shall be obliged to pass a noviciate of three years only instead of five; and we insist that after the said term of three years he be considered a graduate in the profession, and as a subject who has duly complied with and fulfilled all the laws of our institution.

20. At the same time, we require of the said brother that he make oath never to desert our society, but continue attached to it, and never think of withdrawing himself from our service without our especial leave; promising to pay due submission and obedience to our statutes, under pain of our highest displeasure.

CHAPTER XXIII.

*OF THE DISAGREEABLE ADVENTURE POOR GUZMAN MET
WITH WHILE BEGGING IN THE CITY OF ROME
DURING THE HEAT OF THE DAY.*

IN addition to these laws, this famous doctor in the art communicated to me others which he told me had been established by the most celebrated beggars of Italy, and particularly by the renowned Albert, surnamed Messer Morcon—in other words, Mr. Bigguts—who was looked upon as Generalissimo of the beggars at Rome. In truth, he well deserved that title, and even that of Prince of the Beggars, or rather the Archbeggar of Christendom.

He was worthy to be Emperor of the Idlers, as well on account of his appearance as of his manners

and understanding. He would devour at a single meal the whole of the tripe and trotters of two good sheep, a cow's udder, and ten pounds of bread, not to mention the scraps that he collected, which he generally applied solely to his own use. He would drink in proportion. It is true that he alone would scrape up as much in begging as ten of the most deformed and crippled of our society; but then he had occasion for all this, as I before told you, for although he consumed every scrap that was given him, and spent all his money in drink, he was frequently obliged to have recourse to the larders of other beggars, who, considering themselves his vassals, were always well pleased to contribute to his subsistence. He never seemed satisfied either with wine or victuals. He always went, both summer and winter, open breasted, and never wore either shirt or stockings. His head was always bare, his chin always well shaved, and his skin was as white and shining as if it had been rubbed with lard.

Among other rules made by this famous Messer Morcon during his reign, there is one which is well worth repeating: he ordained that every beggar should sleep on the ground, without either mattress or pillow, and that they should leave off begging every day as soon as they had gained sufficient for the day's necessities; for, said he, a true beggar ought to depend entirely upon Providence, and think not of the morrow.

I got all the laws of begging by heart, but was content to observe the most essential only. Never-

theless, as I was ambitious to distinguish myself in every profession I embraced, I was frequently tempted to run risks which turned out neither to my honour nor profit. An unlucky adventure of this description occurred to me one day in the month of September. The day was oppressively hot; I happened to go out between one and two o'clock, to beg from door to door in the streets of Rome, imagining that every one who saw me begging at such a time would be sure to think I must be half starved, and that I should not fail to have either victuals or money given me on that account. In vain, however, did I range the principal quarter of the city, making the air resound with my lamentations; I met with nothing but repulses and reproaches.

I repaired to another quarter, hoping to find hearts more sensible to my cries. I knocked at a door with my stick, but as I obtained no answer I repeated my strokes very loudly three or four times; but just as I had made up my mind not to budge until I had made myself heard, a kitchen-boy appeared at one of the upper windows, who seemed to be washing dishes, and, as a reward for my obstinacy, poured down a caldron of boiling water on my head, and immediately afterwards cried out, "Scaldings! look to yourself below there!"

As soon as I felt myself baptized in this hot manner, I set up so frightful a yell, and made such grimaces, that I gathered a great crowd round me in a moment. Some few blamed the kitchen-boy, but all the rest told me that I was much in the wrong to

presume thus to disturb gentlefolks who were asleep, and that if I did not feel inclined for sleep myself I ought not at least to wake others. Some among them pitied me, and, to console me for my unlucky accident, put a few sous in my hand, with which I withdrew, intending to go home and dry myself. "Admirable!" thought I on my own way home. "Wilt thou never be content with what is needful for thee? what demon tempted thee to do what others of thy calling never venture to attempt?"

I was already very near my own lodgings when a neighbour, who was one of the oldest of our fraternity, called me into a cellar where he resided, and, seating me on a three-legged stool, asked me where the devil I had come from? what bath I had just left? and who had made me in such a pickle? When I related my adventure he laughed most heartily. This old man was a native of Cordova, born, trained up, and destined to die in the profession of begging.

"My poor Guzman," said he, "I fear much you will be a simpleton all your life; the blood is too hot in your veins; you seem to wish to be master before you have served your apprenticeship. Do you not see your folly in violating our customs? But, as we are both from the same country, and your extreme youth is some sort of excuse for you, I will endeavour to point out your duty to you more clearly. In the first place, my friend, know that nobody ever gives alms at Rome in the afternoon. The citizens, as well as the people of quality, always take a nap at that time of the day; and you are sure only to dis-

please by waking them or disturbing their slumbers. When a beggar has howled twice in a supplicating tone at the door of a house without seeing any one, it is a sign that the people of the house do not choose to be seen, and, consequently, the best way is to be gone without further loss of time. Be not so imprudent as to open a door that you find shut, still less to enter the house; ask whatever you want from the street, for fear of the dogs of the house, who can easily distinguish us from other men, and who, considering us their rivals, have a natural antipathy towards us. One of the best pieces of advice that I can give you," continued he, "is by reminding you that you are a Spaniard. This supposes in you a disposition always ready to treat with rudeness all such as withhold their charity; thus, when you address yourself to one of these ill-disposed rich ones, who not only make it a rule never to assist us, but will also reproach us most bitterly for our idleness, recollect that you should always answer their hard-hearted treatment with words full of softness and humility. Another piece of good advice: should you by chance, which has happened to me at least a hundred times in my life, approach a cavalier who, just as you implore his charity, takes off his glove and put his hand in his pocket, I do not forbid you to feel rejoiced at such an action; but if you afterwards discover that it was only with the intention of drawing out his handkerchief, do not venture to testify chagrin at your disappointment, nor growl at him, for there may chance to be another gentleman near

him who might have intended to relieve you, had not your grumbling prevented his design."

After the old Cordovan had given me these political precepts, he taught me how I might raise a pretended leprosy and ulcers; how a leg might be swelled; how I might make an arm appear dislocated, and render my face paler than death itself. In short, he possessed a thousand curious secrets, which he was so kind as to communicate to me, not more out of friendship for me, as he told me, than from the fear that he might leave this world for the other without having bequeathed them to any one. In fact, he died a few days after this conversation.

CHAPTER XXIV.

*OF THE AGREEABLE LIFE GUZMAN CONTINUED TO LEAD
WITH HIS COMRADES. AN ACCOUNT OF HIS JOURNEY
TO GAETA. HISTORY OF A BEGGAR WHO DIED AT
FLORENCE.*

NOTWITHSTANDING the disposition recommended by the tenth statute of our laws, I did not think proper to communicate to my comrades the secrets of the Cordovan, who had revealed them to none but myself, nevertheless, we all lived together in perfect union. We frequently met together of an evening to the number of ten or twelve, and passed our time in practising and inventing new exclama-

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tions to excite pity. There were even some among us who discovered new forms of benediction which they got a livelihood by, and which they sold to the others, who were always willing to purchase on account of their novelty.

On festival days we would be up betimes and run to the churches where indulgences were dispensed, that we might secure the best places by being as near as we could to the holy water, or at the entrance of the chapel near the station, which is the place set apart for penitents to stand and recite the prayers prescribed for them. Thus were our mornings employed, and towards night we generally left the city to make an excursion into the villages in the environs, as well as the farms and country-seats, whence we seldom returned without being well laden with abundance of lard, bread, eggs, and cheese, sometimes with a good collection of old clothes, so well did we know how to excite the compassion of the good folks in the country. If on the road we saw any person of distinction coming towards us, the instant we perceived him at a distance we set up a concert of plaintive voices imploring his charity, that he might have abundance of time to put his hand in his pocket, otherwise he might have passed on without stopping.

When we had to meet a number of citizens together, and had time to prepare for it, we would every one of us act a different character; one would halt as if he were lame, another would counterfeit blindness, a third would carry one arm in a sling,

another would affect dumbness, a fifth would distort his mouth or his legs, and a sixth would walk on crutches; in a word, we every one of us performed a different part, taking care to place the most skilful amongst us at our head, to render the scene more affecting.

You would have been well amused had you but heard the various benedictions we employed to extract the marrow from their purses. We prayed that God would give them children, prosper their commerce, and bless them with good health; such wishes as these were scarcely ever thrown away. There never was a party of pleasure or an entertainment of any sort going forward, but we were sure to smell it out and pick up something; and we never failed to repair in small numbers at a time to such places, where we always got as much as we could eat. The hotels of bishops, cardinals, ambassadors, and all the great houses were open to us, and we frequented them by turns; thus we partook of everything, though we possessed nothing.

I know not how my comrades felt affected when they chanced to receive alms from the hand of a pretty woman; for myself, miserable sinner, when a young female approached me whose figure I admired, I could not refrain from leering upon her with an amorous look when I implored her charity. If she herself gave me money, I pressed her hand tenderly in my own, and kissed it before I allowed it to escape. But I always committed this rash action with so respectful, or rather so hypocritical an air, that the

lady, not suspecting that it was merely for my own gratification, always considered this insolence as a transport of gratitude.

The pleasures of this world which have been thought to be the share of the rich and great only, may much more reasonably be said to fall to the lot of us beggars, who enjoy the sweets of life with more freedom, more relish and tranquillity. Even though beggars had no other advantage than that of begging and receiving without either embarrassment or shame, they enjoy therein a privilege which none of the rest of mankind possess, sovereigns only excepted, who also beg of their people without blushing; but the difference between them is, that sovereigns often make poor folks contribute to their wants, while beggars seldom ask of any but such as are richer than themselves. There is evidently, then, no condition of life more happy than that of a beggar, and fortunate were it indeed if every one could know when he is so well off. The greater number of my comrades, however, were so entirely engrossed with delicacies of animal life, that one-half of their felicity was actually thrown away; they did not reflect how sweet it was to live independent, without the dread of lawsuits, or the fear that their money was badly applied; to be unaffected by the intrigues of State, by the uncertainty of business and speculation, or by the numberless mischances and embarrassments to which every other man is constantly subject. The first man who embraced this mode of life must doubtless have been a great philosopher.

I would willingly have believed beggars entirely free from the control of fortune, did not that malicious goddess take pleasure in occasionally showing her power over them by subjecting them to little disgraces as well as others. Of this nature was what happened to me in the town of Gaeta, whither I went out of curiosity, imagining that a man like me, who might now be reckoned skilful in my trade, would have no sooner entered the place than alms would shower down as thick as hail upon him. The instant I arrived there I covered my head with a false scab, which I knew well how to counterfeit, and placed myself at the door of a church. The governor of the town happened to pass by me, and, after having looked at me for some time with attention, gave me alms. A considerable number of the inhabitants of both sexes followed his example, and this good luck lasted for several days; but covetousness, as the saying is, at last bursts the bag. On the next festival day, thinking that my pretended scabby head was too old a trick, I determined to make myself an ulcer on my leg, and soon raised one by making use of one of the secrets the old Cordovan had revealed to me.

Having prepared all that was necessary to dress up my leg so as to yield me a good harvest, I posted myself in the best situation at the door of another church, where I immediately began to writhe myself about and howl, as if I had been exceedingly afflicted by my ulcer, so as to attract the notice of every one that passed by me; and though my healthy countenance was sufficient to have belied my complaints (for I had

neglected to manufacture a pale face on the occasion), and have created suspicion, yet I found that my apparently distressing situation excited the compassion of many, for these charitable folks did not examine so accurately as to detect me, and I in consequence received individually greater contributions than all the other beggars who were there, who wished me and my ulcer at the devil.

Unluckily, however, the aforementioned governor chanced to come to hear mass at this church, and had no sooner listened to me for a moment than he recognised me by my voice. He could not otherwise have possibly recollected me, for my head was completely covered with a large napkin which descended to my nose; but he was a man of experience, who had seen a great deal of the world, and as soon as he espied me I knew well that he said to himself, "It cannot be four days since I saw and relieved this same fellow; can he possibly have been afflicted since that time with so bad an ulcer on his leg? There must be some roguery in this affair, and it is incumbent on me to inquire further into it."

"My friend," said he, addressing himself to me, "I am much affected by your miserable situation; follow me home and I will give you a good shirt."

I was so imprudent as to obey him, without the slightest suspicion of his design upon me, for had I in the least guessed at it I should soon have forced my way through his servants, and disappointed him of the punishment he had devised for me. Having arrived at his house, I did not presage much good

when he looked at me with earnestness, and then demanded of me in a severe tone if I was not the same person whom he had seen a few days since at a church door with a bad head. I turned pale at this question, and could not muster impudence enough to answer in the negative, whereupon he insisted on seeing my head, and not perceiving the least appearance of disorder, "Tell me," said he, "by what singular remedy you can possibly have cured yourself so perfectly in the short space of four days, and how you can have so inveterate an ulcer on your leg, accompanied with so ruddy a complexion?"

"Sir," replied I, so disconcerted that I knew not what I said, "I know not; but God was pleased that it should be so."

I was still more troubled when I heard him desire one of his servants to run for a surgeon. I knew well what was preparing for me, and should soon have made an attempt to escape if I had not observed that the door was locked; but as such was the case I was obliged to submit. At length the surgeon arrived and examined my leg most attentively, and, skilful as he was, would very probably have been deceived, had not the governor communicated to him in a whisper the reasons he had for thinking me an impostor; after this the surgeon had but little trouble in discovering the truth; he examined the ulcer afresh, and then declared, with an air of importance and sagacity, that I had no more ailment in my leg than he himself had in his eye. "Bring me some hot

water," said he, "and I will prove clearly what I assert." This was soon supplied; the surgeon rubbed and washed my leg, which became in an instant so clean and healthful that I dared not utter a syllable in defence of my knavery.

The governor, thinking that he was bound to reward me for my address, gave me the shirt he had been so kind as to promise, which was fitted on my back in a moment by one of his lusty servants, who applied thirty hearty lashes by his master's directions, by way of recompense for my journey. After which I was ordered to leave the town immediately, with the promise that I should be doubly remunerated if I ever ventured to make my appearance in it again. This was a very superfluous prohibition, for the pleasant treatment I had met with in Gaeta was of itself quite sufficient to divest me of all desire of visiting that place again. I left this cursed town therefore without further delay, shrugging up my shoulders all the way I went, until I arrived once more in the pope's territories. I greeted my dear Rome with a thousand blessings as I entered it, and no sooner saw it at a distance than tears of joy trickled from my eyes, and I could not refrain from wishing my arms long enough to have embraced it.

I soon rejoined my old comrades, but took good care not to communicate my late disgrace to them; had they known it, I should never have heard the last of my flogging adventure at Gaeta, which would have been an everlasting joke against me. I told them that I had merely taken a trip out of curiosity

to some of the neighbouring villages; but that I had found by experience that there was no place like Rome for persons of our calling. I must indeed have been half mad when I thought of leaving this blessed city, where we all lived so well, never failing to collect daily as much money as we wanted. Every fowl fills its crop by a single grain at a time. In like manner we accumulated our money; and after having converted it into gold, we carried it about with us sewed to our garments under rags, which frequently concealed a sufficient sum to buy a complete new suit. We might be said to have been stitched up with gold; and there were some few old rascals among us who were worth a very considerable sum, which they always carried about their persons. Persons of our class generally possess the vices of avarice and cruelty in the highest degree. I will illustrate this assertion by relating to you a very singular example in the history of a beggar of my own acquaintance, which is well worth the recital.

A poor beggar, named Pantalon Castello, a native of Genoa, having married at Florence, had one son by his wife, whom he intended so to establish in life as to render it unnecessary for him either to work, or go into service, to obtain his livelihood; with this view, taking advantage of the facility with which the delicate members of a new-born infant may be dislocated, he determined on the barbarity of crippling his own child. Perchance, reader, you will feel inclined to stop me here, to tell me that this is by no means extraordinary among beggars. I am ready to

allow that beggars of every nation in the world are in the habit of availing themselves of such inhuman means to excite compassion ; but our Pantalon, like a true Genoese, was willing to surpass all his predecessors in this point, and disfigured his poor son so dreadfully that there was scarcely such another monster in the world. This unfortunate child, who, with the exception of his arms and tongue, which had not been touched, was deformed all over, was no sooner out of his infancy, than he began to exhibit himself through the streets in a kind of cage, on a little ass which he guided with his own hands.

If, however, his body had but little of the human form in it, by way of amends he had a great deal of wit, which shone the more brilliantly as he advanced in age. His repartees were so pleasant and so much to the purpose, that he was the admiration of all who knew him, and received great alms, which he owed no less to his facetious and good-natured manner than to the compassion excited by his unfortunate person. Deformed and ugly as he was, however, he lived until seventy-two years of age, after which he fell sick ; and, knowing well that his illness must be fatal, he began to reflect on his past life, and sent for a confessor, a pious and learned man, with whom he was acquainted. Having discoursed with him about all his affairs, as well spiritual as temporal, he called in a notary, to whom he indited his will in the following terms :—" I recommend my soul to God who created it, and my body to the earth, and I wished to be interred in my own parish.

“*Item.*—I desire that my ass be sold, and that the money accruing therefrom be employed in defraying the expenses of my burial. As for the pack-saddle, I bequeath it to the grand duke my lord, to whom it of right belongs, and whom I hereby nominate executor to this my will, and universal heir to my property.”

This beggar died a few days after, and his will, being made public, became the talk of the city of Florence. As every one had known him to be a merry-conceited fellow all his life, it was the general opinion that he had hoped, by this seeming burlesque, to make folks laugh at him even after his death. But the duke somewhat differed from them; for, having frequently heard of the testator and his pleasantries, he suspected there might be some mystery in it. To unravel it, therefore, he ordered the pack-saddle which was bequeathed to him to be brought to his palace, where he caused it to be unripped in the presence of the whole court, who were not a little surprised at discovering in it several pieces of gold of all kinds, to the value of three thousand six hundred crowns, of four hundred maravedis each. It came afterwards to be known that it was by the advice of his confessor that he had thus disposed of his property, which the grand duke, like a just and pious prince, made a good use of by employing the whole of it in founding a perpetual mass to be said for the testator's soul.

CHAPTER XXV.

*HOW GUZMAN EXCITED THE COMPASSION OF A
CARDINAL, AND WHAT FOLLOWED.*

HAVING risen one fine morning betimes, as was usual with me, I seated myself at the gate of a cardinal who passed for one of the most charitable men in Rome, having first taken great pains to swell and dress up one of my legs into an ulcer, which might have deceived the most skilful surgeons. I had not on this occasion forgotten to make my face as pale as possible, for I should have been inexcusable indeed had I committed the same fault twice. I began begging in the most dolorous tone that my voice was capable of, and several of the servants who were passing in and out were much affected by my plaintive moans; but this was merely practising for the game I had in view. It was the pity of their master that I hoped to excite, who no sooner made his appearance than I redoubled my cries and complaints, addressing him in these words: "O noble Christian! friend of Jesus Christ! take pity on a poor afflicted sinner, diseased and crippled in the flower of his age; be pleased, your eminence, to take compassion on my misery, and praised be the passion of our Redeemer."

The cardinal, who was a holy man, stopped to

listen to me, and, hoping to please the Lord in extending his charity towards me, he turned to his domestics, saying, "Take this poor wretch in your arms, and convey him into my chamber; there let these rags be taken from off him, furnish him with clean linen, lay him in my own bed, and have another prepared for me in the next apartment." These orders were instantly obeyed. O charity! which may serve for an example to other prelates, who in general consider Heaven as indebted to them when they pay the slightest attention to the misery of the poor! The cardinal did not stop here, but sent for two of the most celebrated surgeons in Rome, desiring them to examine my leg, and do everything in their power to cure it; and, after having promised to reward them well for their trouble, he left them to their own proceedings.

On the faith of this promise the surgeons immediately began to inspect my ulcer, which at first seemed to them incurable. Mortification seemed already to have taken place. This was occasioned, however, by nothing but the herbs I had applied, and could only last for a certain time, after which, by omitting the application, my leg would have been restored to its natural healthy state. They then threw off their cloaks, drew out their cases, and ordered some fire to be brought them in a chaffing dish, some fine white linen, and some eggs and milk. While all these things were preparing, they began to question me concerning my disorder, how long I had been afflicted with it, and if I knew how I first came by

it? if I drank any wine? what I was accustomed to eat? In short, they asked me all the questions usual with persons of their profession on such occasions, to which I was not able to answer a word, so dreadfully frightened was I at the terrible preparations that were making before my eyes. I knew not what saint I could presume to implore, for I could not flatter myself that there was one to be found in heaven willing to intercede for such a knave as myself. I began to reflect on what had so recently happened to me at Gaeta, and could scarcely hope to escape in this instance with so slight a punishment.

The surgeons, after having turned my leg in all directions twenty times over, retired into another chamber to discourse together, and communicate their observances to each other more privately. I was terribly alarmed as to what would be the result of this consultation, not knowing but they might decide on cutting my leg off. I leaped straightway out of bed, therefore, to follow and listen to them, fully resolving to confess the truth if I should find they had determined upon amputation. I approached the door, and while I listened most attentively to their conversation, heard one of these sages say to the other, "We may make a good job of this, brother, if we can understand each other; the leg is dreadfully inflamed, and must take a long time to cure."

"You certainly must be jesting," answered the other; "there is no more inflammation on that leg than on my hand; it is a description of disorder

which I am sure I can convince you may be removed in less than two days."

"Do not believe it," replied he who had first spoken; "by St. Comas, I flatter myself I have some knowledge in ulcers, and I do maintain that this is a decided mortification."

"No, no," retorted the other; "believe me, our patient is an arrant rogue, and has no real disorder whatever to complain of; I know well enough how a sham ulcer may be raised, for I have often met with similar cases, and can even tell you the herbs this impostor has made use of to reduce his leg into its present apparently diseased state."

The surgeon who had been my dupe was quite abashed at these words; but, thinking that it concerned his reputation to persist in his first assertion, he would not yield to his comrade's opinion. The dispute would have grown very hot between them, had not the second surgeon been politic enough to terminate it by entreating his brother to examine the leg afresh.

"Just inspect it again," said he, "and you will no longer doubt the deception."

"Willingly," replied the other; "and if I find the ulcer such as you have affirmed, I will readily yield to your judgment."

"That is not enough," replied the former; "in acknowledging your error, you must also agree that I deserve to have a greater share of the profits than you."

"By no means," cried his companion; "do not

take so much merit to yourself for such a discovery, which I might have made without your assistance. I insist that we share equally whatever fees his eminence may give us."

They disputed afresh on this point, and their quarrel grew so high that they came at length to the resolution of laying the full particulars of the case before the cardinal.

When I found how things were likely to end, I hesitated no longer, but entered the room suddenly, threw myself at their feet, and with tears in my eyes (for I had a peculiar talent in being able to cry when I would), addressed them in these words: "Take compassion, my dear gentlemen, on one who is but a man like yourselves. You well know that the rich are so hard-hearted nowadays that it is impossible for the poor to excite their pity, otherwise than by covering themselves with wounds and sores, and that it is but seldom that we can obtain anything but the most miserable pittance even by these means. What can you gain by discovering my knavery? you will lose the reward which has been promised you, which cannot escape you if you can consent that we all three concert matters together. You may safely venture to place confidence in me, for the fear of punishment will insure my discretion."

The surgeons, after a little reflection, made up their minds to profit by this opportunity of touching the cardinal's money. This was no sooner agreed to than we returned to his eminence's chamber, where they seated me on a chair, and began to re-examine my

leg, which they plastered up with the drugs they considered most likely to make the sore last as it was. They then bound it up, and wrapped a napkin round it, and, observing the cardinal enter the room at that very instant, took me up in their arms to keep up appearances, and placed me on the bed again. His eminence, who was extremely uneasy on account of my ulcer, inquired about it immediately.

"My lord," said one of the surgeons with a grave countenance, "this poor lad's situation is truly pitiable; his leg is already mortified; we trust, however, that, with God's assistance, we may be able to do something for him, but his cure must be the work of time."

"It is most fortunate for him," said the other surgeon, "that he has this day fallen into our hands; one day more must have proved fatal; and Heaven had certainly ordained that his life should be saved by sending him to the door of your eminence."

The cardinal was extremely pleased at this report, and told them that they might take as much time as they pleased, provided they cured me in the end. He besought them afresh to neglect nothing that might contribute to my recovery, promising that he would see that I should be well treated in his house. They assured him that his confidence should not be misplaced, and that they would not fail, one or other of them, to call and see me twice a-day; for that it would be necessary for them to consult together upon the slightest change that might take place in my disorder. After this they withdrew, and left me more

at ease in my mind ; for to this moment I had been very suspicious of these two treacherous rascals, lest they should expose my knavery, while they pretended to be accomplices. These unconscionable dogs obliged me to keep my chamber for three months, which appeared three ages to me, so difficult is it to lose the desire for gaming and begging. In vain did I lie in a fine bed ; in vain did I fare like his eminence himself ; nothing could recompense me for such confinement. At length I pressed, I tormented my surgeons so eternally to bring this comedy to an end, that they were obliged at last to yield to my importunities. They left my ulcer, therefore, to take its course, and when they found that my leg was restored to its natural state, acquainted the good cardinal with it, who was quite astonished at so wonderful a cure, and dismissed these quacks, after having paid them much more than they deserved. His eminence had been so kind as to pay me several visits during the course of my pretended illness. I had frequent conversations with this holy prelate, who, having discovered in me a sort of wit which pleased him, had taken a great fancy to me ; as a proof of which he proposed and seemed to wish to take me into his service, among the number of his pages, an honour which was too gratifying to me to think of refusing.

CHAPTER XXVI.

GUZMAN BECOMES PAGE TO THE CARDINAL, AND COMMITTS A THOUSAND MISCHIEVOUS TRICKS IN HIS SERVICE.

THUS did I all of a sudden become a page. This was, in truth, a fine leap for me, although between knave and page there is no difference but their dress, for their propensities are precisely the same; it served, however, to amuse me, and prevented my growing idle, though I felt like a fish out of water in my new employment. As a beggar I was in my element; accustomed to the soups of Egypt, I felt myself at home nowhere but in the tavern. I was therefore by no means pleased by the life I led in this house, where everything was regulated by rule and compass; where at one time I was employed with a flambeau in my hand running up or down stairs, to light our visitors as they entered or left the house, and at another was obliged to dance attendance in the antechamber, kicking my heels there for about two hours, until I received my orders. Always in readiness to follow carriages by night as well as by day, or to wait at table and devour with my eyes only all the dishes that were served up; in a word, it was necessary for me to be at hand on all occasions, and that not for a few days only, but from the first day of January to the last of December.

Ah! miserable slave, you will naturally say, what profit could you possibly derive during a year of so much trouble? Alas! I must answer, I was servant to everybody; a fine coat was certainly given me, but that not so much for my own use as my lord's honour. I got nothing in this service but the itch and severe colds, except some ends of flambeaux which I stole and sold to the cobblers; and it was necessary to be very cautious to commit even these little thefts with impunity. Woe to us pages if we were ever caught in the fact! we were sure to get well lashed. Besides the pieces of wax that we cut off the flambeaux, we sometimes laid our hands upon some tit-bits that were served up at table, which we ate in private. But such tricks as these required more dexterity than was possessed by any of my comrades, and a pretty accident befell one of these silly fellows. As he was clearing away the dishes after having waited at table, he thought proper to steal some honey fritters, which he wrapped up hastily in his handkerchief, and crammed into his pocket. The fritters being very hot, and pent up in so close a place, began to discharge their honey, which ran all down the poor page's leg. Ill-luck directed the cardinal's eyes that way, who, guessing at first sight what it was, began to laugh most heartily. "Page," said he, addressing himself to this simpleton, "I perceive blood trickling down your legs, are you anywhere wounded?" At this question all the company, which was very numerous, and even the servants, turned about to look at the culprit's leg, and the poor devil of a page

stood confused and mortified, knowing that his crime was discovered. Happy for him had he been let off for the shame of enduring the extreme laughter which he excited, but he paid much more dearly the next day for his fritters, the honey of which was but sour to him.

Most of my other comrades were as green as this one when I was first received among them, and as I could not refrain from following my old habits, I employed myself in robbing them of whatever they had worth stealing, in spite of all the pains they took to secure themselves from my clutches. This soon taught them to be rather more vigilant. Our master kept in a closet adjoining his own bed-chamber a large chest, filled with all sorts of dried sweetmeats, which he was extremely fond of. In this chest, among other things, were prunes from Genoa, bergamot-pears from Aranjuez, melons from Grenada, citrons from Seville, oranges from Placentia, lemons from Murcia, cucumbers from Valencia, love-apples from Toledo, peaches from Arragon, and raisins from Malaga. In short, the most delicious sweetmeats and dried fruits of every description were to be found in this enviable chest, which never failed to make my mouth water whenever his eminence gave me the key to get some out for him. On such occasions, however, he always took good care to be present himself, distrusting, as I supposed, my thieving disposition. I was much mortified at this suspicion, which only served to excite my desire, which was already strong enough to have a taste of

these fine preserves, and, not being able any longer to resist the temptation, I thought of nothing but the means of gratifying my inclination. The chest was about a yard wide, and two yards and a half long, and had only one lock in the middle. Seeing this, I procured a wooden wedge and raised a corner of the lid, by which means I made an opening large enough to admit my arm; but as I could then only choose such sweetmeats as lay within my reach, I fastened a hook to the end of a long stick, with the assistance of which I had the pleasure of picking and choosing where I pleased. Thus I made myself complete master of the chest without having the key of it.

Notwithstanding the great quantity of fruits in the chest, my stick was so frequently at work that they began to diminish apace. The cardinal observed large holes here and there, which did not much please him; but one day, being desirous to taste a very fine citron which he had taken particular notice of the preceding evening, what was his astonishment when he found it flown? He summoned his principal officers before him, and told them he was determined to know which of his domestics had been so insolent as to open his chest and touch the fruits he so much prized, charging his major-domo, a sour, ill-natured priest, to leave no stone unturned to find out the thief. Suspicion fell upon the pages, and we were ordered to assemble in the hall, where we were searched one after another; but to no purpose were our pockets ransacked, in vain were we threatened, for I had long ere this not only eaten the citron but digested it.

This affair soon blew over, and no more was said of it. The cardinal, however, had not forgotten it, and I was obliged to be so much on my guard that I did not venture to pay another visit to my favourite chest, even to look at it, for several days. This vexed me exceedingly; for I had acquired a particular relish for his eminence's sweetmeats, and, so far from thinking of giving them up, was waiting anxiously for the first opportunity of having another touch at them. One day, therefore, while the cardinal was engaged at play with some other cardinals after dinner, I doubted not that I should have abundance of leisure to resort to my old sport again. Quite confident of this, I ran for my tools which I had hid in a snug place, and glided into the closet without being perceived by any one. Scarcely had I raised the lid and thrust in my arm, when his eminence entered the chamber, and finding neither of his pages there, assisted himself to what he wanted. I heard him, and endeavoured to release my arm with so much haste and fear that I struck the wedge out with my elbow, and the lid fell on my arm, so that I was caught like a bird in a trap. The cardinal, hearing the noise, began to be alarmed for his sweetmeats, and entered the closet immediately, where he found me in this ludicrous situation.

"Ah! ah! friend Guzman," cried he, "is it then you who rob me of my sweetmeats?"

The grimaces that I made at finding myself so fairly caught were so ridiculous that he could not restrain his laughter. He even called the other

cardinals that they might enjoy my confusion, who left off playing and ran up immediately; and after they had diverted themselves for some time at my expense, they entreated him to forgive me this time, saying that they were convinced I should not again transgress. But my master was inexorable; all that their prayers could obtain for me was, that I should receive only a dozen lashes instead of four-and-twenty, which I had so richly deserved. This chastisement could not be remitted; and the major-domo, Signor Nicola, my mortal enemy, was charged to inflict it in his own apartment, which duty he acquitted himself of with such hearty goodwill that I was scarcely able to stir for above a fortnight after.

It was not many days, however, before I was avenged on him for this hard usage. You must know that this chanced to be just the season for mosquitoes, with which Rome was more than usually swarmed that year. Signor Nicola, who loved his ease, was complaining one day in my presence how much he was annoyed in his bed by these troublesome companions.

"Signor," said I, "you will have only yourself to blame if you are not quickly rid of them for ever. In Spain we have an infallible secret to secure ourselves from being plagued by these insects, which, if you please, I shall be happy to communicate to you."

"You will oblige me beyond measure," answered Nicola.

"You have only," replied I, with a serious countenance, "to lay at your bed's-head a good bunch of





parsley well steeped in vinegar, of which these vermin are extremely fond, and which is sure to kill them."

He believed me, and tried the experiment that very night, but it had a very different effect, for he found himself assailed more cruelly than ever, and was even fearful that they would have eaten his nose off or torn out his eyes, and had given himself a thousand violent thumps on the face during the night to get rid of them. Thus had he fought with them until daylight, when he found that he had not come very victoriously off, for that even of such of his enemies as he thought he had crushed, very many had escaped. I did not fail to go into his chamber to see him the first thing in the morning, and his swollen eyes quickly assured me of the success of my plan. He told me how he had been tormented, saying that my secret was not worth a farthing. I affected great astonishment.

"You cannot then," said I, "have left the parsley long enough in the vinegar, or the vinegar you were supplied with must have been very weak and bad; for I assure you, that by carrying a bunch of parsley prepared in the same manner into my own chamber, I have entirely cleared it of these troublesome guests, who were there in swarms before I used this remedy."

The major-domo was fool enough to believe me again, and left a whole bundle of parsley to soak for above six hours in the strongest vinegar he could procure, and then not only put it into his bed, but scattered it all over his chamber. God knows what furious attacks he was therefore exposed to; I verily

believe that all the mosquitoes in the neighbourhood poured down in legions upon him to devour him, and made so furious an assault that they left him like a leper all over his body. What a thrashing would he have given me had he met me on the following day! but his eminence, to prevent accident, called us both into his presence, desiring him not to treat me harshly on the occasion, and at the same time gave me a slight reprimand, though he could scarcely restrain his laughter at the success of my scheme.

"For what reason," said the good prelate, "have you played such a scurvy trick upon Signor Nicola?"

9 ("My lord," replied I, "for no other reason than that when he had orders to give me a dozen lashes for my exploit among the sweetmeats, he accommodated me with more than twenty on his own account. I have only therefore avenged my scars by those I have inflicted on him."

Thus ended this notable affair. Ever since my unlucky adventure of the sweetmeat-chest, I had been discharged from the chamber of the pages. The flogging I got was not the only way in which I was punished, for I had been passed into the chamberlain's department, to serve among the foot-boys until I had sufficiently atoned for my offence to be reinstated in my former post. The chamberlain was a man of honour and sincerity, but rather too scrupulous, and even inclined to be visionary. He had several relations in the neighbourhood, who were very virtuous girls, but so poor that he would send every

day two-thirds of his own meals to enable them to subsist. He went occasionally to dine or sup with them. This afforded an opportunity to the officers of the family, and especially our major-domo, to rally him before his eminence, who was greatly diverted by it.

One night when the chamberlain came home, after having dined with his relations, finding himself rather indisposed, he retired into his own chamber and went to bed. The cardinal, not seeing him at supper, inquired after him. "My lord," said one of the servants, "he is not very well." The cardinal, who was anxious to know what could ail him, sent one of his gentlemen to see, who returned with a report that the chamberlain only required a good night's rest, and that he doubted not he would be perfectly well again by the morning. This passed off well enough; but the secretary Nicola, who was always ready to pick a hole in the chamberlain's coat, having learned the next morning that he was much better, caused one of the pages to be dressed up in a young woman's clothes, who, with the assistance of a bribe to one of the foot-boys, introduced himself into the bedroom while the chamberlain was fast asleep, and glided to the side of the bed where he was concealed by the curtains. Immediately after this the secretary went to wait on the cardinal, who inquired after the invalid the first thing. "He has passed but an indifferent night, I understand," answered Nicola, "but is much better this morning." The cardinal, who loved all his domestics as a father loveth his children, resolved,

upon hearing this, to go and see the chamberlain himself, who was disturbed from his slumbers to be apprised of the honour intended him.

His eminence then entered the sick man's chamber, and sat down on a chair at the side of the bed, but scarcely was he seated when he saw the metamorphosed page slip suddenly from the bedside, who, counterfeiting most naturally the embarrassed female anxious to escape, got off at length, crying, "Oh! good God, I am ruined for ever! what must his eminence think of me?" The cardinal, who had not been prepared for this scene, and who believed his chamberlain to be a religious, steady man, appeared to be extremely surprised at this sight; but great as his astonishment was, it amounted to nothing in comparison with that of our visionary chamberlain, who, as if just roused from a most horrible dream, cried aloud that it was assuredly the devil himself come to tempt him in the shape of a woman. This idea caused so excessive an agitation of his spirits that he could scarcely be restrained from leaping out of bed in his shirt before his eminence, and taking to his heels. As all the servants who were present were privy to the secretary's design, they could not avoid laughing, from which the cardinal soon perceived that it was only a trick upon his chamberlain, and had the goodness to relieve his distress by undeceiving him himself. After which he retired.

All this was just over when I reached home, having been out on different commissions the whole of the morning. Finding the worthy chamberlain very low

spirited on my return, I inquired the cause, and he related the whole affair to me, saying he had no doubt that Nicola was at the bottom of it. "I would willingly, my dear Guzman," added he, "most willingly, sacrifice one of my eyes to be amply avenged on him for this plot, and with your assistance I doubt not I may be able to return him a 'roland for his oliver.' A knowing shaver like you will soon devise some good trick to play him."

"I must confess," answered I, "that were I in your place, the secretary should have no occasion to go to the pope for absolution; I would make him do sufficient penance for his trick. Remember, however, that he is my superior, and it is not for me to interfere with officers who are above me. If I was excused for the trick I played Master Nicola on my own account, it was only because what I did was to revenge myself for his former cruel conduct towards me."

In vain did I represent to the enraged chamberlain that I dared not take up his cudgels lest I should repent it; he would admit of no excuse. His prayers, my great friendship for him, the mortal hatred I had for the secretary, and, above all, my natural propensity to mischief, determined me at length to espouse his cause. "Well, then," said I, "leave it to me, I will undertake to make my talents useful to you. All I require of you is to behave towards the secretary as though you had not the most distant thought that he was the author of the late plot." The chamberlain, simple as he was, played his part so well that all the servants thought he had forgiven all that had passed.

In the meantime I was on the alert in preparing everything to keep my promise. I bought some rosin, mastic, and frankincense, reduced the whole into a powder, and mixed them well together in a paper packet which I kept in my pocket until an opportunity presented itself of making use of it. This offered itself very opportunely a few days after. It was the Spanish post-day, and Mr. Secretary being very much engaged, I went to his apartment in the morning, and entered his wardrobe where his servant was. "James," said I, "my dear fellow, I have a loaf and a fine slice of fried ham below. I want but a bottle of wine to make a good breakfast. If you can supply this, you shall share with me; otherwise, I must look for some one else."

"Mr. Guzman," answered James, his eyes sparkling with joy, "I am your man; I can easily get you a bottle of the very best wine, and if you will but wait here, I shall be with you again in an instant."

Thus saying he disappeared, leaving me master of the wardrobe. Then looking about for his master's breeches (for I knew the secretary did not put them on in the morning, having slipped on his dressing gown over his shirt that he might write more at his ease), I perceived them on the back of a chair. I took them up and turned them inside out, and after having strewed my powders all over the inside of them, I replaced them exactly as I found them. James soon returned with the wine, but scarcely had we begun breakfast when his master called him to assist in dressing, and detained him in his room so long that I was obliged to find

another to share my bottle with me, waiting most anxiously for the time when I should have the pleasure of seeing my composition operate.

It had its full effect at the cardinal's dinner, where there were a number of visitors that day. As we were in the middle of the dog-days, the extreme heat of the weather was very favourable to my trick. Mr. Nicola was in waiting in the parlour with the other officers. I soon remarked by his distortions that he felt a great itching in a part of his body where, through respect, he dared not put his hand. He knew not how to keep his countenance, and, unfortunately, the more he shrugged himself about the more he increased the pain. As he was naturally as hairy as a bear, the powder stuck in his hair and flesh, and twitched him like the points of a thousand needles. This was not all, for the cardinal, having some orders to give him, called him, and whilst in the act of whispering to him his eminence was obliged to stop his nose all at once, saying, "What on earth have you about you, that you smell so strong of rosin and frankincense?" The secretary coloured at these words, and stood farther off from his master, who, perceiving that almost all my comrades, whom the chamberlain had let into the secret, were whispering and laughing among themselves, began to suspect that I had been at my tricks again. As I stood very near to him looking very demurely all the while, "Guzman," said he, "what is the fun now that seems to cause so much tittering?"

"I know not, indeed," answered I, "unless it be on account of our secretary's having taken

a laxative draught composed of turpentine this morning." The cardinal laughed most heartily, and the whole table followed his example. Nicola now began to see through the business, and, not being any longer able to endure the jeers and laughters with which the dining parlour resounded at his expense, took to his heels with a precipitation which redoubled the pleasure of the company. After he had left the room, the cardinal, impatient to know what was really the matter, addressed himself to the chamberlain, who concealed nothing from him. This adventure established my reputation in the palace as a most formidable character.

After having been banished two months from the chamber of the pages, I was at length recalled and re-established in my former post, the duties of which I resumed with as much effrontery as if nothing had happened. This brought to my mind a fable which you have doubtless heard, of the Air, the Water, and Shame, who having kept company together for some time, and being at length obliged to part, were desirous to know where they should see each other again. Quoth the Air, "You will always find me on the top of mountains;" "And I, without fail," said the Water, "may always be found in the bowels of the earth." "As for me," said Shame, sighing, "if I am once parted with, it is impossible to meet with me again." Nothing can be more true; in my own case I felt it, for I was now no longer susceptible of shame at the commission of a bad action; the only shame I felt was in being detected. In

short, I was so naturally disposed to knavery, that I really believe I would have thrown myself headlong from the top of the Castle of St. Angelo if I saw anything at the bottom worth stealing.

As the good cardinal was a great lover of sweetmeats, especially of those that came from the Canaries in barrels, he would always send for more when his stock was out; and when the barrels were empty they became the property of the first servant who took possession. One fell to my share in this manner, in which I kept my handkerchiefs, cards, dice, and other effects of a poor page. One day a man called to inform his eminence that a merchant had just received twelve barrels of fruits of this description. The cardinal ordered them for himself. I heard this order given, and said within myself, "It shall go hard but I have one of them." I retired to my chamber to consider how I could make myself master of one, and resolved on this plan: I instantly emptied my barrel of my old rags, and having filled it with earth and straw, I closed it down, and put on the hoops again so neatly that it looked as if it had never been opened. This done, I went down into the courtyard to wait the arrival of those that were full of sweetmeats. I had not waited long before I perceived them coming with the major-domo at their head, who ordered us to carry them immediately into the closet where his eminence usually kept them. Each of my comrades carried up a barrel. I took good care to be the last with mine, having my reasons for wishing to walk after all the rest. We had

necessarily to pass by my chamber, so that, seeing myself followed by no one, I slipped in unperceived, and, changing the barrels in the twinkling of an eye, carried the one I had so well filled with earth and straw and laid it boldly among the rest in the cardinal's closet. His eminence was himself there to see them, and when they were all arranged in order he turned towards me, with a smile on his countenance, and said, "Well, Guzman, what think you of these barrels? it will not be so easy a matter to thrust an arm into these, or to use wedges, as with the former ones."

"If wedges will not do," replied I coolly, "I may be tempted to employ my nails, for the hand sometimes does the office of the arm."

"Ah!" replied his eminence, "but I defy thee to pilfer these barrels, which have no corners to be lifted up as the chest had."

"True," replied I, "but I beseech your eminence not to defy me in anything; for the devil may in such a case furnish me with the means of deceiving you."

"Be that as it may," cried the cardinal, "I give you leave with all my heart to steal these sweetmeats if you can, and I give you eight days to do it in. Should you be dexterous enough to succeed, you shall not only be allowed to keep what you steal, but I promise you as much more; on condition, however, that should your genius be obliged to yield, you will without murmuring submit to whatever penalty I may choose to inflict."

"That is but just, my lord," said I, "and I agree to the alternative. Yes," continued I, "if I do not perform my task in four and twenty hours, for I ask not eight days for so trifling an affair, I will submit to any punishment Signor Nicola may be pleased to sentence me to, who, after the affair of the mosquitoes and that of the turpentine, is not likely, you will allow, to be too lenient a judge."

The cardinal laughed at these last words, and it was finally agreed that I should be punished or rewarded on the following day.

What precautions did not his eminence take to secure his barrels from my clutches! besides keeping the key of the closet in his own possession, he set some of his most confidential domestics to be most constantly on the watch. The next day at dinner the good prelate, fancying me a little thoughtful, said, with a smile, "Guzman, I see plainly what makes you so dull; you are reflecting on the luxury of receiving a hundred lashes from the vigorous arm of Signor Nicola."

"Indeed, my lord," replied I, "nothing was farther from my thoughts, for the sweetmeats are already in my possession."

The cardinal, fully persuaded that no one could possibly have gained access to his closet or touched his sweetmeats, seemed surprised at my effrontery, and rallied me all dinner-time on the strapping that was justly my due. I allowed him to divert himself as long as he pleased, but when the dessert was about to be served up, I stole privately out of the dining-

room up to my own chamber, and drew out of my barrel some of the sweetmeats, with which I filled a basin I had taken off the sideboard for that purpose, and carried them to his eminence's table. He was so strangely surprised at the sight of them that he could scarcely believe his own eyes.

"Here," said he to the chamberlain, giving him the key of the closet, "go and count the barrels attentively; there must be one short." The chamberlain returned with an assurance that they were all safe.

"Ah, ah!" said the cardinal, "I now see through your finesse, my poor Guzman. You have purchased some of the same merchant who sold me these fruits, and now hope to make me believe that you have stolen them; but it will not do, Mr. Guzman; your undertaking was to open and pilfer one of my barrels and take out some of the sweetmeats; this was our wager as you will be pleased to recollect—you cannot, therefore, escape the punishment. Come, Signor Nicola," continued he, "seize this rash youth, and inflict on him such chastisement as he may appear to you to deserve."

"Softly, my lord," said I at these last words, "I confess that I amply deserve all this if the sweetmeats that I have just laid before you are not some of those your eminence bought yesterday; but you must allow also that I have won if I prove the contrary by convincing you that I have at this moment in my own chamber one of the twelve barrels that were yesterday brought into your palace."

"Be cautious what you affirm, page," interrupted the chamberlain; "there are twelve barrels in my master's cabinet, which I have counted over and over again."

"That may be," said I to the chamberlain, "but recollect that 'the wolf often eats the counted sheep.'"

The cardinal, anxious to know the truth of the matter, hastened his dinner over, that he might examine his closet, whither he repaired, accompanied by all the guests that dined with him that day, who for the most part felt convinced, by the bold face I assumed, that the affair would not end to my disadvantage.

His eminence counted the barrels himself, and finding twelve, "Guzman," said he, "here are the twelve barrels that I bought."

"My lord," answered I, "there are certainly twelve, but they are not all full of sweetmeats."

The cardinal, losing patience, wished to have them opened.

"No, no," cried I, "I will save you that trouble." Saying which, I pointed out to him the barrel I had filled with earth and straw, and while they were opening it I ran to my chamber, whence I returned with the other, which was still half full of fruit, and related in what manner I had gained possession of it.

All the company present applauded me for my dexterity, and laughed most heartily at the adventure. His eminence, agreeably to promise, presented me with a second barrel, which I resigned to my comrades, to show that what I had done was but to

amuse my worthy master. Diverted, however, as he was by my sleights-of-hand, he would undoubtedly have dismissed me his service, for example's sake, had he not apprehended that if he abandoned me I might have been driven to the commission of some more desperate act, which would end in my utter destruction. Thus this good prelate, compassionating my youth, retained me in his family in spite of all my faults, that I might not be compelled to commit greater crimes elsewhere.

CHAPTER XXVII.

*GUZMAN CONTINUES PLAYING HIS TRICKS AT THE
CARDINAL'S, WHO AT LENGTH DISMISSES HIM.*

THE cardinal was certainly the best master in the world. What infinite pains he took to make me an honest man! He would neither employ threats with me, nor order me to be beaten, lest I should be terrified and run away from him; the mildness of his character prevented him from resorting to such means. He endeavoured to inspire me with a love of virtue by gentle remonstrances, and even by gifts. When I did anything praiseworthy, which indeed happened very seldom, he never failed to reward me well for it. When he was at table, and thought I had a longing for any little tit-bit, he would give it me, and this condescension was generally accompanied by a little good-natured bantering. "Guzman," said he one

day, giving me with his own hand a piece of tart, "receive this from me as a tribute, which I pay to preserve peace between us. The fate of Master Nicola makes me quake for the safety of my sweetmeats."

It was thus that he condescended to familiarise himself with his servants, who, delighted with so kind a master, would almost have sacrificed their lives for his sake. If servants generally dislike those masters who treat them harshly, on the other hand, those masters who are kind to their servants are always sincerely beloved.

A short time after the barrel adventure, a large chest of sweetmeats, finely gilded and curiously arranged in boxes, was sent to his eminence from Genoa. His lordship was more than usually pleased with them, as they came from a very dear relation who made him a similar present every year. The sweetmeats were exquisitely good, but being put into boxes which were rather damp, it was necessary to place them in the sun to take off the moisture which the boxes had communicated to them.

The cardinal seemed at a loss to know where they should be put to be safe from my pilfering hands. Each of the servants gave his opinion, but there was not one amongst them bold enough to take charge of and to answer for them.

"Well, well," said his eminence, seeing me come in (for I had been out of the palace while this consultation was going on), "here is Guzman, who will extricate us from this difficulty. My friend," continued he,

"we are at a loss for a proper place to dry these sweet-meats in, for I am excessively afraid of the rats!"

"My lord," answered I, "nothing in the world can be easier than to hinder the rats from touching them: you have only to give them up to me and my companions."

"Very true," replied the prelate, smiling; "but though this may be a very certain method to keep them from the rats, I intend to try another, and am resolved to give them into your keeping. Take care to expose them to the sun every day, and see that you give a good account of them; you see what state they are in. You must watch without ceasing for their safety, and return them exactly as they are delivered to you, under pain of forfeiting my favour."

"Ah, my lord!" cried I at these words, "you know not to what trial you expose the frail Guzman; I can guard well enough against the rats, and against the most cunning of my companions, but I cannot indeed guard against myself. I am, alas! an unhappy son of Eve, and if I find myself in a paradise of sweet-meats, ten to one but some unlucky serpent may tempt me. But yet, if your excellency says to me, 'Guzman, I am content that you should eat my sweet-meats, provided on opening the box that it nowhere appears that they have been meddled with'—on this condition I will take them under my care, and we shall both be satisfied."

"I consent to it," answered the cardinal; "if you are dexterous enough for that, I will forgive you,

but be assured that if the theft can be perceived you shall be chastised."

I undertook the commission on these terms. I opened and spread out the boxes one after another in a gallery that was exposed to the sun; and the beauty of these sweetmeats made a suitable impression on such a liquorish young rogue as I was. Nevertheless, whatever longing I had to taste them, I waited until they were a little drier, which being the case a few days afterwards, I thought of nothing but how I should manage to pilfer part of this fine fruit with impunity, and thus Mr. Enterprise went about it. I first shut up the boxes, which I then turned gently upside down; and then, having drawn out with the point of a knife the nails which fastened the bottom of them, I took some sweetmeats from four boxes only. I then carefully filled up with paper the empty spaces, and restored the boxes to their original state. One evening as the prelate was taking his afternoon's repast, for it was a fast day, I told him that I thought the sweetmeats were dry enough to be put away.

"I need not ask," answered he, with a smile, "if you have eaten a good part of them."

"At least, my lord," said I, "it does not appear so, if you look at them."

"We shall see," said he, "let some of the boxes be brought here directly."

I took three of my companions into my room, where they were, and gave each of them one to carry, taking a fourth myself. These four boxes were those which had passed through my hands. I presented

them to his excellence, and asked him if he did not think that they appeared to be well preserved. He inspected them very narrowly, and, seeing nothing to cause any suspicion, he said to me, "I shall be perfectly satisfied if all the others have been as well preserved as these. His curiosity was satisfied; he looked at those boxes which I had not touched, and after a long inspection, he confessed "that if I had stolen any of the sweetmeats, it certainly was nowhere apparent." Upon this I ran to my room, and placing the sweetmeats which I had stolen into a dish, I returned to show them to the prelate, assuring him at the same time "that I had not tasted his fruit, whatever longing I had for them, as he might easily ascertain." I leave it to you to imagine the surprise of the cardinal and of all his domestics, who, looking upon me as little less than a juggler, were more than ever on their guard against me.

We were made to study four hours a day, we were taught Latin, and even Greek; and we employed the rest of our time in reading amusing books, and in the instructions of the music and dancing master. Gaming, however, was still my favourite amusement; but we served a master whose character obliged us to be very cautious how we conducted these affairs, if he had had the least hint of such a thing he would most likely have made a clear house of us all.

It was in this manner that I spent my youth in the service of the cardinal, where it may be said truly that I led a very agreeable life. Nevertheless, far from being happy, I imagined myself in cruel slavery.

I was even foolish enough to regret twenty times having quitted the society of the beggars ; I had also another cause for being tired of my situation as page : the beard on my chin convinced me that I was no longer a child, and I burned with desire to wear a sword.

“ It is time,” said I, “ that I should begin to think of making my fortune ;” but far from thinking that I was in the best house possible to forward this design, and from following a line of conduct suitable to that idea, I devoted myself so incessantly to the gaming table that I neglected my duty. Not finding any one at home who would play deep enough for me, I contracted the habit of going into the city to seek for players, men to my taste, and did not return during the whole day. At length I carried this eagerness for play to such lengths, that his lordship, hardly ever seeing me, insisted on being informed the reason of my being always abroad, and my companions were obliged to communicate it to him. He was truly displeased at it. He spared nothing to cure me of this pernicious habit, to accomplish which he employed remonstrances, promises, and even prayers, but unfortunately all his pains were bestowed to no purpose.

One day, when he was discoursing about me to the principal officers of his household, he said to them, “ Since all the means which I have made use of to recall him to a sense of his duty have been hitherto useless, I will try another method that has just occurred to me. The next fault that he commits

he shall be sent from my palace, in order that we may see if this punishment will make any more impression on him than all the lectures I have given him. I do not mean by that," continued he, "to abandon him to want, his usual allowance shall be given him every day, and I will take care that he shall be informed that I shall always be ready to take him into my service again when he has changed his course of life."

O excellent prelate, whose extraordinary virtue is worthy of eternal praise!

It was not long before I furnished his excellency with an opportunity to make trial of the new method he had thought of to correct me. Two or three days after I lost at play the whole of my clothes, not excepting my livery coat, so that I had nothing remaining to cover me except my breeches and doublet, for which I could get no one to play. I returned to the palace in this condition, and shut myself up in my chamber. My master, seeing such an instance of disorderly conduct, executed his design. He ordered the major-domo to replace the clothes I had lost, and then to dismiss me. The major-domo obeyed, and, sending me away, told me that his eminence loved me still in spite of my faults; and that he had given orders that I should have my meals at the palace as usual, and that he would receive me again among his domestics when he was persuaded that I sincerely repented of my past course of life. Far from feeling grateful for this kindness of the holy prelate, I was so proud, or rather so foolish, as to spurn at it; and I

went out of his house grumbling as if I had had great cause of complaint, and vowing that I would never enter his doors again. I thought indeed that he was very wrong to use me thus ; and determined to revenge myself upon him by ruining myself.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

GUZMAN ENTERS INTO THE SERVICE OF THE SPANISH AMBASSADOR.

MY ridiculous pride long prevented me from perceiving the extreme folly of my behaviour. At first I amused myself by strolling about the streets of Rome, and eating at the houses of my acquaintance, but I found that my civil reception among them did not last long ; scanty fare and gloomy looks saluted me everywhere, and I was soon at a loss for a dinner. This verifies the Spanish proverb, "Live a week with your uncle or cousin, a month with your brother, a year with your friend ; but in the house of your father you may live for life."

I soon perceived that spunging was a villainous trade, and began to regret that I was self-exiled from the table of the cardinal's pages ; but the fault was then irreparable, since at that time his eminence fell sick and died. He left to all his servants, by his will, money enough to support them comfortably for the remainder of their lives. This circumstance drove me to despair, as I could not forgive myself for having, by my deplorable folly, excluded myself from the pro-

vision which would otherwise have been made for me. I saw no other resource but to offer my services to the Spanish ambassador, who had been one of the most intimate friends of my deceased master, and knew me very well. He had also in more than one instance given me tokens of his good will.

I had no sooner expressed my desire of entering into his service, than he testified the utmost willingness to receive me. He had often condescended to honour with a smile the jests and stories he had heard from me at the palace of the cardinal. He considered me as a dexterous young fellow, and very well adapted for his buffoon and pimp. This last honourable employment was what he chiefly designed for me, as you will soon perceive. But first I must depict the character of this minister.

He was chosen to conduct an embassy to Rome at a very critical period; this situation required a penetrating genius and a man of great address. His excellency perfectly justified the confidence which the king reposed in him. But he had a foible—a little too common amongst men of rank—that of being too much addicted to women. But for this circumstance, he would have been more esteemed than any other ambassador at that court. Having then judged me worthy to have the management of his intrigues, he began to inform me of his virtuous intentions. Then, that I might give him a specimen of my abilities, he employed me in some trifling messages of gallantry, in which I had the good fortune to acquit myself to his entire satisfaction. This *coup d'essai* was followed

by two or three commissions of the same nature, though somewhat more difficult, which were conducted with equal success. Nothing more was necessary to establish me perfectly in his good graces, and he conceived such a friendship for me that I soon became his favourite page. From this moment Signor Guzman was all in all in his master's house. I did as I pleased, and everything that I did was well done. The other domestics did not see my growing greatness without envy, especially those of longest standing; some called me my master's buffoon, and some his pimp in ordinary. Nevertheless, I did not presume upon the favour of the ambassador, and was so far from doing these spiteful gentry any ill offices with his excellency that I gladly seized every opportunity of serving them, in consequence of which they forebore to show me any particular mark of their ill will, and we lived together on pretty tolerable terms.

While I was with the ambassador I did not disgrace the reputation I had acquired on account of my frolics at the palace of the cardinal, and I was not very sparing of my tricks, as there could not be any place in the world that could open a wider field for them than the house of my new master. Parasites often came in at dinner time. My fellow-pages and I were not at a loss to distinguish them from respectable people whom my master was really happy to see at his table. We took care to be very attentive to the latter, but as for the spungers, who were most of them mere adventurers, they had but scurvy commons, which diverted the ambassador exceedingly.

One was suffered to ask in vain for drink during the whole meal; it was of no use to make signs, we pretended not to understand them. Another had his glass handed to him half full, and the glass shaped in such a fashion that half the liquor would remain in the glass, which only tantalised his thirst. Another was served with water prepared of a red colour. If a dainty morsel was carved for any one of these gentry, we changed his plate so quickly that the poor devil had scarcely time to taste it. In a word, we did everything in our power to drive them all from his excellency's table, and were sometimes lucky enough to succeed.

Among the adventurers who were drawn together by the savoury fumes which proceeded from our kitchen, there was a foreigner who surpassed all the others in impudence. He affirmed himself to be a relation of the ambassador, though his manners were as opposite as possible to those of a man of quality. His brazen impudence was his only introduction, and, in spite of the frozen reception he met with from his excellency, he assiduously pestered him with his company at dinner. He did nothing but boast of himself and of his country; the politeness of his countrymen—their civilities to strangers and their honesty were topics of which he was never tired. As for the women, the wives were all Lucretias, and the daughters Vestal Virgins. I should never have done if I were to repeat all the praises which he heaped upon the people of his own country; at last he wearied all the company with his foolish discourse,

but especially my master, who, being quite out of patience, said to me one day in Castilian, which this blade did not understand, "You know not, Guzman, how weary I am of this fellow's rhodomontade."

It may be supposed that this hint was not lost upon a page who was neither deaf nor a fool. I understood well enough that this troublesome personage must absolutely be got rid of. To accomplish this end, I posted myself behind his chair at dinner, and whenever he asked for drink, which happened almost every minute, I took a very large glass, which I filled to the brim with so strong a sort of wine that it could not fail to intoxicate him speedily; when I saw that this was effected, I tied one of his legs to his own chair with a piece of silk twist, without any of the guests perceiving what I did. When dinner was ended, the ambassador rose, and the company followed his example, but when my gentleman would have done the same, he and the chair had such a heavy fall together that I am much mistaken if his nose and jaws did not rue the circumstance for a long time afterwards. I pretended to help him up and gently untied the string. Nevertheless, in spite of all the wine that he had drank, he perceived that everybody laughed at his expense, and, suspecting the cause of his disaster, he went away in a rage and never came again, which pleased his excellency beyond measure that he had so easily got rid of such a troublesome guest.

Having thus driven this spunger from the field, my companions and I next undertook the discomfiture

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of the others, but we found some who were not to be so easily disposed of. Amongst others, there was a Spanish bully, who called himself a gentleman of Cordova. He came one day about dinner time, and saluted his excellency the ambassador very ceremoniously, informing him that he was in pecuniary distress, and that his pressing necessity obliged him to disclose his situation.

My master, who easily understood the drift of all this harangue, took out a purse of pistoles, which he gave him unopened, and, bowing politely, turned away from him ; but the Cordovan, far from retiring upon this hint, followed him closely, and began talking of the dangers he had gone through, and at last had the effrontery to take a seat next to his excellency at the table. "I hope," said he, "your excellency will not be offended at the liberty I am taking, but even if I was not a gentleman of family, my having served in his Majesty's army is sufficient to entitle me to the honour of eating with princes. Besides," added he, "the table of a nobleman of your reputation should always be open to officers whose services have not met with a merited recompense."

After this fine speech he fell to on the dish nearest him with the greatest avidity. He ate like a half-starved glutton as he was. Then looking at me, who was nearest to him, he beckoned to me five or six times to bring him some wine ; but, unluckily for my gentleman, instead of paying any attention to his signs, I pretended that I did not observe them.

If he thought at first this neglect arose from care-

lessness or stupidity, he was soon undeceived, and perceived my roguish malice plain enough.

"Page," said he to me in a loud voice, "have you been ordered to let me die with thirst?" Upon this, my master, who had no small inclination to laugh at this scene, nodded to me to serve this adventurer; but I took good care to give him one of the smallest glasses, and was even spiteful enough to hand it him half empty.

Just as this happened, and when I was carrying back the salver to the sideboard, there entered two other parasites whom I knew by having frequently seen them at the ambassador's table. Not being able to find any vacant seats, they began to examine the guests, and particularly the pretended noble of Cordova, and as they seemed to me to regard him with an air of contempt my curiosity was excited. I approached the newcomers, and asked them if the gentleman whom they examined so attentively was one of their acquaintance.

"Gentleman, indeed!" cried one of the two, "surely you are jesting, my friend; learn that this fellow who is now filling at that table the seat which is only for respectable men, and whom you think to be of noble blood, is the son of a man who has often made boots for me, and who keeps a shop near the cathedral church of Cordova."

"If he comes in my way," said the other, "I shall tell him something more than he will like to hear."

Speaking thus, these braggadocios looked very big, twisted their mustachios, and retreated together into

the courtyard to consider what steps they should next take.

When they had been there a short time, I went out and joined them. "Gentlemen," said I, "this man whom you despise so much affirms that you are a couple of despicable fellows, and says he is surprised at your impudence in daring to intrude yourselves here. If you will wait till he has dined, he will come and tell you more himself."

"Let him come, let him come!" cried they both together; "we will let him know whom he has to deal with."

Having thus enraged them against the officer of Cordova, I returned to the latter, and in a whisper loud enough to be heard by the whole company, informed him that there were two gentlemen below who wanted a moment's conversation with him.

"Let them have patience," answered he, "I shall not quit his excellency while he is at table."

"They affirm," added I, "that you have announced yourself falsely as a cavalier of noble birth, and that you are but the son of a cobbler."

"Heaven and earth!" cried he, with a furious aspect; "can there be any one so tired of his life as to dare to talk in this manner of a man like me? Where are these scoundrels?" continued he, rising from the table, "where are they? their ears, at least, shall pay for their temerity."

"You have but to follow me," said I, "and I will bring you to them instantly."

At these words I took him by the arm and led

him out of the room, though he seemed to have but little desire to quit it.

Immediately the ambassador and the company hastened to the windows which looked into the courtyard, to see the termination of the quarrel which I had contrived to stir up between these three bullies.

"Gentlemen," said I to the two who were walking in the court, "here is the person whose father, if you are to be believed, is a Cordovan shoemaker."

"Let him thank his stars," cried they, "that our hands are tied by the respect we owe to this palace, which we consider as belonging to the king of Spain."

Seeing the officer in such a panic that he could not utter a single syllable, I took up his cause. "Gentlemen," said I, "this cavalier will go out directly if you wish it, and is ready to terminate his dispute with you in the street."

"No, no," answered they, retreating with the utmost precipitation, "we shall take another opportunity to meet him."

Their retreat brought back the courage of our gallant, who pretended to treat them as cowards. He himself therefore went out a moment after them, but took care to choose a different road. The ambassador and his guests were infinitely diverted with this ridiculous adventure, and a thousand witty things were said at their return to table at the expense of our three adventurers. After dinner every one retired, whilst his excellency withdrew to his chamber to enjoy his afternoon's nap.

CHAPTER XXIX.

*OF THE TRICK THAT GUZMAN PLAYED UPON A CAPTAIN
AND A LAWYER, WHO CAME TO DINE AT THE
AMBASSADOR'S WITHOUT HAVING BEEN INVITED.*

NOTHING afforded my master more pleasure than seeing his genteel acquaintance at his table, and he was often willing even to tolerate parasites, provided their wit compensated for their entertainment; but he was always much vexed at the appearance of the latter, when it so happened that he had a select party to dine with him. This being the case, you may well conceive that it was not without considerable pain that he saw two of these hangers-on enter his room one day when he expected the French ambassador and other persons of distinction to dine with him. One of these was a captain, and the other a lawyer, neither of whom wanted merit in his own line; but as they could talk on no other subject but their respective professions, they had become quite a nuisance in the house.

The ambassador could not help bowing as he saw them enter, of which, however, they took not the slightest notice; and, so far from taking their leave after this cold reception, they seemed determined to stay, and joined the rest of the company accordingly. My master looked at me, and I understood in an

many tricks - for others]

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instant that it would not displease him if I could in any way divert the company at the expense of these gentlemen. Thus, then, I set about it.

You must be informed, in the first place, that the lawyer, who was a grave, formal man, had a pair of huge whiskers, of which he took such particular care that he scarcely dared even to smile for fear of discomposing them. I observed that he often took a sly peep at them, with great delight, in a little mirror which he drew out of his pocket with his handkerchief, pretending all the while to be blowing his nose. Having taken particular notice of this manœuvre of his, I waited patiently until the dessert was placed on the table, when, the conversation becoming lively, I soon had an opportunity of putting my plan in execution. I then went up to the captain and whispered something to him which made him laugh. He answered me in the same tone, and so I continued laughing and whispering with him for a considerable time, always taking pains to look at the lawyer, to make him think that we were talking of him. At length, when I thought it was time, I assumed a more serious air, and said aloud, as if still continuing the conversation, "No, no, captain, I am your most humble servant, but I protest I can take no part in this joke; the respect that I owe my master, and his friend the lawyer, will not permit me to take such a liberty."

"What's the matter, Guzman?" said my master, hearing this.

"Truly, sir," answered I, "the captain can tell you

better than I. He has been cracking jokes upon the lawyer's whiskers for some time past, and now wishes me to amuse the company with them."

"Come, come, Guzman," said the French ambassador, "let us know the whole of it."

"Since my master and you command it," said I, "it is my duty to tell you. The captain has been informing me that Mr. Lawyer keeps a wench to comb and dye his whiskers every morning, that they may not turn grey, and always sleeps on his back for fear of rumpling them. In short, he has been amusing me on this subject for this quarter of an hour, trying to persuade me to repeat the jokes as though they were of my own invention; but it is not for a boy like me to rally so venerable a personage in this manner."

The captain, instead of denying what I asserted, laughed heartily, and all the company followed his example, without knowing whether I spoke truth or falsehood. The lawyer hesitated for some moments how to take the joke, but not being able any longer to withstand the noble captain's immoderate laughter, "Rascal," said he, in a rage, "you have good cause, truly, to rally me upon my age, you who boast of your services under Charles V., whom you never saw but in a picture! But I degrade myself by putting myself in comparison with a man of your stamp."

"Very fine, Mr. Lawyer," interrupted the captain, growing warm, "you forget the company we are in. Were I not more reasonable than you"——

"More reasonable!" cried the lawyer in his turn,

"why there is not a greater fool on the face of the earth."

The captain had now entirely lost all temper, and would doubtless have answered his friend the lawyer by throwing one of the plates at his head, had not the company interfered and appeased them both. Neither of them, however, ventured to come to the house again; and thus I freed my master of two other most troublesome guests.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE AMBASSADOR FALLS IN LOVE WITH A ROMAN LADY; GUZMAN UNDERTAKES TO ASSIST HIM IN HIS AMOUR; HIS SUCCESS.

I HAVE already informed you, gentle reader, that the only blemish in the character of the ambassador was his libertine principles respecting the fair sex. He had seen, though by what accident I never knew, the wife of a Roman knight, and speedily became violently enamoured of her. He had already put an old bel-dame on the scent, who was trained to the seduction of young women, but, however dexterous his agent might be, all her pains and exertions had hitherto proved useless, and my master was driven to despair. At last he opened his mind to me, and expressed the more surprise at Fabia's withstanding his advances, as this lady, in the flower of her youth, was united to a husband who had all the disagreeable infirmities of old age. The design of this confidence was to engage

me to assist him in this intrigue, which he had but little difficulty to accomplish. I undertook this honourable employment which my master conferred upon me, and on my informing him that I was particularly intimate with the waiting-maid of that lady, he conceived the most flattering hopes. He could not contain his joy on learning this circumstance, but embraced me, and said that, having her attendant and myself in his interest, he did not doubt that with our assistance he should, sooner or later, obtain the object of his desires. In the next conversation that I had with Nicoleta (which was the name of the lady's maid) I contrived to engage her in my master's favour. She spared no pains to ingratiate him with her mistress, by taking every opportunity of praising him, and of saying something in disparagement of the old husband. Nevertheless, after losing a great deal of time in attacking Fabia's virtue by every sort of discourse the most likely to stagger it, she began to despair of success, when one morning that lady, putting on of a sudden a smiling air, said to her, "My dear Nicoleta, I will unfold to you the inmost recesses of my soul; I can no longer dissemble with you, so wholly devoted as you are to all my wishes. Learn, then, that I think the Spanish ambassador every way worthy of the love of a woman of quality. I can no longer continue to treat him so harshly. But you know my character; you know that I am a slave to reputation. Find out some method to compromise my inclination for him with my delicacy, and if you can discover one that proves satisfactory, I shall no

longer make any scruple of returning the passion of this amiable nobleman. I allow you to divulge everything to Guzman, and even wish that he may, if possible, be introduced to me to-night. You can bring him into the house secretly, and I shall be able to converse with him without discovery."

Nicoleta, who was transported with joy to see her mistress so favourably inclined towards my master, embraced her knees, kissed her hands, and acted a thousand fooleries before her, which testified her rapture. Then, in the hope of strengthening her resolution, she began to boast of the good qualities of the ambassador, and concluded by assuring her that the intrigue should be conducted in so prudent a manner that no one living should have the slightest suspicion of it. Satisfied with these assurances, Fabia told her that she would leave everything to her zeal and discretion.

Upon this Nicoleta came to seek for me, and, as if the excess of her joy had almost deprived her of her senses, she threw her arms round my neck, crying out, "My dear friend, you will be transported at the agreeable news I bring you; my mistress resists no longer, but is willing to make your master the happiest of men." I was so delighted at hearing these words, which I little expected, that I took Nicoleta by the hand, and led her like a triumphant general into my master's closet, where we began to congratulate ourselves on the change that we had wrought in Fabia. His excellency presented a purse of Spanish pistoles to the waiting-woman, who re-

ceived them with a very good grace, after a little ceremonious reluctance, as is usual upon such occasions.

This officious agent at length retired, after she had carefully instructed me concerning the place where I was to meet her that night, and the hour of rendezvous when I was to be introduced to Fabia; and my master and I were left alone. We passed the whole afternoon in conversation on this intrigue, he relating to me how he first obtained a sight of the lady, and I congratulating him on his having made so agreeable an acquaintance.

At the appointed hour I hastened to the rendezvous, at the place fixed upon by Nicoleta, who came at last to inform me that her mistress could not see me that night, and this disappointment happened for three or four nights following. My patron and I did not augur very favourably from this beginning; nevertheless we did not totally despair; and, at last, one night the confidante informed me, through a small window on the ground floor, that in a few minutes she could introduce me to her mistress.

You must know that the passage in which I stood was extremely muddy, and it poured with rain so as to wet me to the skin. I bore all this for two hours with a patience which nothing but my extreme zeal and attachment for my master could have inspired. At length I heard Nicoleta call me. I obeyed her summons instantly, and was led by her through a little door, which was shut to again as softly as it was opened.

"Guzman," said she, "I will just run and let

Fabia know that you are here, and she will be with you in an instant." The voice of my charmer soon made me forget my late wetting, and I thought of nothing but the happy moment in which I should behold the lady who had so captivated my master, and the extreme joy with which I should acquaint him that I had been so happy as to obtain an interview. It was not long before Fabia really came with her maid.

"Nicoleta," said she, "while I am conversing with Signor Guzman, do you watch my husband's chamber, and should he perchance ask for me, lose no time in letting me know."

It is impossible for me to tell you whether Fabia was in reality beautiful or ugly, for she had thought proper to receive me in the dark, so that I could not even see her face. In a low voice she began by inquiring anxiously after my health. I followed her example, and added the finest compliment I could think of in behalf of my master, whom I represented as dying for love of her; notwithstanding which, it appeared to me that she paid but little attention to what I was saying, for she constantly interrupted me in the most pathetic parts of my speech. At length she said, "Signor Guzman, I trust you will excuse me if I do not listen to you in the manner you deserve; but I am, extremely alarmed lest some of my husband's spies should overhear our conversation. Walk on a little way," continued she, "and you will enter a parlour, where I entreat you will wait for me; meantime, I will just see that all is right in

the house, and shall soon be with you again. Be sure you make no noise."

I was weak enough to believe what she said, and groped my way forward as if I had been playing at blindman's buff. But instead of reaching a parlour, I found myself in a backyard, the pavement of which was so dirty and slippery that after a few steps I rolled into a heap of mud, and, in rising again, struck my head with such violence against a wall hard by that I lay for some time without sense or motion. Having, however, somewhat recovered of this shock, I groped very carefully along the wall in search of the parlour I had been directed to, and at last entered at a little door which I found open, confident that I must then be right. Again I was mistaken, and had the consolation to find myself in a narrow passage, which was not six feet in length, on each side of which were two drains from the housetop, and as it still continued pouring with rain, they had so inundated this spot, that I found myself on a sudden up to my knees in water. I ran back instantly, in the hope of retreating as I had entered, but the door was no longer open. Either the wind had blown it to, or some one, who had followed me close behind all the while, which indeed is more probable, had served me this trick. Be that as it may, I found myself obliged to make up my mind to pass the night in this swamp, where, as soon as I ran from one drain which was pouring upon my head, I found myself saluted by the other. "Out of the frying-pan into the fire," muttered I to myself. "O night, almost

as dreadful as that in which I was confined under a tub, or tossed by devils in a blanket!"

Disagreeable, however, as my present reflections were, they were nothing in comparison with those with which I awaited the morning. "Wretched Guzman," said I, "thou art at last then fairly entrapped! Fabia's husband will doubtless inquire your business here the first thing in the morning. And what answer can you make? If you should tell the truth, for the first time in your life, you will make your master and yourself the common talk of Rome. What answer can you make then, but that Nicoleta had invited you, and that you were under a promise to marry her? And even should they oblige you to keep your word, this misfortune would be preferable to having all your bones broken to make you confess the truth. But who knows that they will even ask me a single question? Perhaps they will murder and bury me on the spot. Nothing can be too bad to fear from a jealous Italian husband."

With these frightful thoughts was I haunted until break of day, when I fancied all of a sudden that I heard the yard-door being softly opened, and I flattered myself at first that it must be either the waiting-woman or her mistress come, out of compassion, to deliver me from my confinement; but nothing was less in their thoughts. The door, however, was certainly open, though I could see nobody who could possibly have opened it. I soon found myself again in the yard which I had passed through overnight, and having pushed open another door

which was only on the latch, I reached the spot where the confidante had conversed with me, and, looking up at the window through which she had spoken to me, I thanked Heaven that I had escaped so easily. I returned quickly to my master's house, and threw myself upon my bed, wrapped up warmly in the bed-clothes, not without serious apprehensions of a most violent cold.

CHAPTER XXXI.

GUZMAN'S ADVENTURE WITH A LARGE HOG, AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

MY mind being too much agitated to allow me to sleep, I could not close my eyes; all my thoughts were engrossed by the adventure which had just happened to me. I attributed everything to the vengeance of Fabia, whom I concluded to be a miracle of chastity, and judged, that in order to undeceive the ambassador, she had given his envoy this gallant reception. But I knew that this affair would raise a laugh with everybody at my expense, and this vexed me more than all the rest. I was also at a loss to know in what way I should inform my master of the story, which, sooner or later, I was sure must come to his knowledge.

When the warmth of the bed had again put my half-stagnated blood into circulation, I put on another suit of clothes in the place of that which the rain had

honoured with so fine a trimming, and presented myself before the ambassador as though nothing had happened. I waited until he should question me, as he always did after he had finished dinner. He called me into his closet, when he said to me, "What is the reason, Guzman, of my not having seen you this morning? I expected you to give me an account of what took place last night at Fabia's house. I am afraid you have but indifferent news to tell me."

"It is true, my lord," answered I, "that my news is not the best in the world. I know not what to think of Fabia. I passed the whole of the night in the streets, without hearing from or seeing either the lady or the maid. Would to Heaven that you had never undertaken this affair!"

"How comes it, Guzman," replied he, "that you are so soon discouraged? Some unseasonable mischance, perhaps, has prevented Fabia from seeing you as she designed, and of which the maid might have been unable to inform you. Do not be disheartened, however, but return to-night to the same place where you waited for Nicoleta before."

I promised my master faithfully to obey his commands. A groom met me as I came out of his excellency's closet, and brought me a letter from a lady, he said, who had desired him to deliver it to me. 'Twas from the waiting maid. She was very much surprised, she informed me, that I had not seen her yet to communicate what passed last night between her mistress and myself; however, that I might make amends for my fault, I had only to

repair towards evening to the lane behind Fabia's house, where we could enjoy a private conversation through the well-known little window. My hopes were raised on the perusal of this billet. At six in the evening I took care to be in the lane, which, as I have already remarked, was extremely narrow, and filled everywhere with mud up to one's ancles. My dulcinea was waiting for me at the window, and at first began to reproach me sharply; but her tone was soon changed on my making an exact recital of what I had suffered, and she began to condole with me on my accident. The trick her mistress had put upon me seemed to excite in her the utmost surprise, and in spite of my prejudice against her, she almost persuaded me that she had no share in it. During this conversation, in order to show my politeness and get nearer the window, I had raised myself up by standing on two stones, which exposed me to a new misfortune which my luckless fate inflicted upon me, as will appear in the sequel. While I was engrossed by the conversation, and thinking of nothing less than of the accident that was about to befall me, a cursed hog, of monstrous size, and covered with filth, rushed out of his sty and ran between my legs in so furious a manner that he fairly carried me off on his back.

You may easily imagine the fine entertainment it afforded the spectators, who were but too numerous, as that part is generally filled with people, to see a man of my figure and dress gallop at full speed out of such a filthy place, mounted on an immense hog, grunting in the most horrid manner imaginable,

covered with mud from head to foot, and clinging most lovingly to his neck, for fear I should break an arm or a leg against the wall, my hat and fine plume of feathers the devil knew where, as they had fallen off into the mud ; all this, I say, presented the passengers with a scene so comical that they laughed, shouted, and made so much noise that my accursed Bucephalus became more furious than ever. At last, not relishing the ardour with which I embraced him, he gave so violent a plunge, that he quickly got rid of his troublesome rider, for whom he took care to choose a soft bed after so fatiguing an exercise, as he deposited me in the very muddiest place possible, just at the entrance of the Square Navonne. Heavens ! what a hue and cry was raised after me ; an infinite number of all sorts of people surrounded me, and insulted my misfortune by a thousand scurvy witticisms, which I suffered in silence ; overcome by shame and confusion, I thought of nothing but escaping into some house, and at last took shelter in one which seemed likely to afford me an asylum. I ran in and slammed the door in the face of the scoundrels who hunted me so unmercifully. They did nothing but cry to the people of the house to turn me out again ; and any one, to see their fury in persecuting me, would have concluded that I had committed some enormous crime which had brought on me this exemplary punishment. To crown my misfortune, the master of the house in which I had taken refuge did not seem much inclined to take my part against the insolent rabble. As he was a jealous old

fellow, and took every shadow for a gallant, he took it into his wise head to fancy that the lamentable pickle in which I entered his house was nothing but a trick I had made use of to cover the delivering of some amorous message. Filled with this preposterous idea, he attacked me with the most vehement language, and, seconded by his domestics, who followed his example, he kicked me out of his house after their fists had bestowed on me a very sound drubbing. Behold me, then, a second time delivered into the power of these merciless jesters, who, running after me as fast as I ran from them, renewed their jokes and insults. I had invoked every saint in the calendar, when Heaven, taking pity upon me, sent to my assistance a young Spaniard, who kindly offered me his services, and those of three or four Italians who accompanied him. With their assistance (of which Heaven knows I stood in need) I escaped from my persecutors, while the Spaniard and his companions, making use of the flat side of their swords, soon put them to flight. I made all the speed possible towards our hotel, caring little for the snarling dogs that snapped at my heels in every street I ran through. At last I was lucky enough to reach home safe and sound, excepting a few bruises. I was even so fortunate as to reach my chamber door without meeting with a soul; but in vain did I search my pockets over and over again—no key could I find, and I concluded that as I drew out my handkerchief to wipe my face, I had let it fall in the house where I had so unluckily taken refuge.

"Ah! miserable wretch," cried I to myself, "to what purpose have you extricated yourself from this embarrassment, if you cannot conceal it from the servants of the ambassador? If any one should perceive you in your present pickle, he will inform the others, and you will become the jest of the house for months to come."

At last, after a long deliberation, I resolved to implore the assistance of one of my comrades, whose room was next to mine, and who had professed a great deal of goodwill towards me. I went and rapped at the door of his room. He opened it, but seeing me so finely decorated, could not refrain from a roar of laughter, which burst from him in spite of his teeth. I was compelled to bear it all with patience.

"My good friend," said I, "when you have indulged your mirth sufficiently, I will request that you will do me the favour to go and fetch a locksmith to open my chamber door."

"I will go directly," answered he, "but first, to gratify my curiosity, tell me how this accident happened to you; I promise you never to reveal it to any living soul."

To get rid of so inquisitive a man, I invented and told him a story in which there was not one word of truth, and as soon as I had finished, begged of him to go for the smith. It was with the utmost unwillingness that he left me in his chamber, he was so apprehensive that I should soil his furniture, that, tired as I was, he obliged me to promise in the most solemn manner that I would not approach it, but that I

would stand up at a distance until his return. Fortunately for me, he returned in a very short time with a locksmith, who opened my door in a twinkling, and I made all the haste possible to change my clothes and linen, and thoroughly wash my face and hands of the filth that covered them.

I had scarcely got rid of my muddy decoration when I was informed that the ambassador wanted to speak to me. He had already heard the catastrophe of the hog. In the houses of men of rank there are always servants who are ready enough to pay court to their masters by betraying their fellows. But my master had heard a very inaccurate account of this adventure. So he directly inquired of me how the accident happened, and whether it might not be attributed to the revenge of the husband of Fabia. I was delighted at his giving me himself so fine an opportunity for inventing a lie. I told him that two tall stout lubbers of footmen, having observed me talking to Nicoleta in the lane, had thought proper to begin joking me on the subject; that I had answered them; that from words we proceeded to blows, and that in all probability I should have killed one of them at least, had it not happened, fortunately for him, that a hog rushed furiously out of an enclosure near the spot, which, running against me, had thrown me into the mud; and that, when I sprang up again to renew the engagement, my enemies had taken to their heels in the most cowardly manner. His excellency was completely duped by this bragging recital. But though for that evening he was imposed

upon, the very next morning he learned the whole truth, and at dinner time I did not fail to hear of it. He bantered me pretty severely on my encounter with the footmen, and honoured me with the title of "The Knight of the Hog." I should have been the first to laugh at his jests if we had been by ourselves, but the other servants were present, and, of course, highly delighted to see me so jeered by my master, as they augured from that circumstance that I should soon cease to be his favourite. Another circumstance, still more vexatious, occurred shortly after. One of the ambassador's friends (who was consequently one of my enemies) waited upon him to communicate, as he said, a very important affair. My master requested him to explain himself, which he did in these words, or at least in terms of the same import: "The warm interest I take in everything that concerns you, compels me to inform you of a report which is circulated in Rome, very much to your disadvantage. Guzman, whose conduct is really very bad, passes for the agent of your pleasures. The adventure of the hog is become the general topic of conversation, and scandal has gone so far as to assert that Guzman was employed in the execution of some love embassy when he became the sport of the populace."

It may be conceived that these words made a very great impression on the mind of such a man as the ambassador, who knew so well what became the dignity of his character and the honour of the prince whom he represented. From that moment he resolved to get rid of me; and though at that time he took no

notice of it, and behaved towards me as usual, I knew him too well not to perceive that he dissembled, and what turn my affairs were likely to take in that quarter. The season of Lent, which now approached, furnished him with a plausible pretext to put in practice the design he had formed of estranging me more from his person.

He said "that he was resolved to quit his course of dissipation and libertinism, and live a more regular life. I will even confess to you," added he, "that I have abandoned my designs on Fabia. My reason is restored. I see the great impropriety I committed in attempting the seduction of that lady; her husband is one of the first men in Rome, and I shall never cease to reproach myself with having meditated the dishonour of his wife."

He discoursed with me frequently in this style, and I pretended to believe him. I did more, I applauded his resolution, and in my turn counterfeited the repentant sinner, telling him that I would follow his example. In fact, I altered my conduct, and made all kinds of hypocritical grimaces, to induce the servants, and particularly my master, to think that I had abandoned love intrigues for ever.

CHAPTER XXXI.

*GUZMAN RESOLVES TO LEAVE ROME ON A TOUR
THROUGH ITALY, WITH THE INTENTION OF VISIT-
ING EVERYTHING WORTHY OF NOTICE IN THAT
COUNTRY.*

I SPENT nearly all my time in my own room, where every day was passed in reading and in receiving a few visitors. One day the young Spaniard who had so generously proffered his services in the hog adventure, chanced to call in, for the sole purpose, as he said, of inquiring after my health. You will readily imagine that I did not fail to receive in the most cordial manner a man to whom I felt myself so much obliged. I repeated my most sincere thanks for his kind assistance on that occasion, assuring him that I could not express how frequently I had regretted that my ignorance of his name and abode had prevented an earlier acknowledgment of his kindness. He answered with apparent modesty "that any thanks were superfluous; that, being a Spaniard and a man of honour, it was but a duty to afford every assistance in his power to rescue a gentleman of my appearance from the insults of the mob." No sooner had he informed me he was my countryman, than I asked him in what part of Spain he was born?

"I am," said he, "a native of Seville, and Sayavedra is my name."

Upon hearing this I redoubled my civilities, as I knew it to be one of the most illustrious families in our city. His accent was certainly Andalusian, and I was not myself better acquainted with Seville; though, in fact, he was a native of Valencia, which he had his reasons for concealing. I offered him my own services, and the credit of my master upon any occasion he might require them. He thanked me for my good wishes, and told me that he had a suit in the ecclesiastical court, which he hoped would terminate favourably; but that if the persons whose interest he relied on should not be successful in their exertions, he would certainly avail himself of my proffered mediation in his favour. As in the course of conversation I happened to mention that I might generally be found at home, as I very rarely left the house, he inquired the reason. I frankly confessed to him that I did not dare to show myself in the streets since the affair of the hog; and that I wished the circumstance to die away and be wholly forgotten before I ventured much into public. He very much approved of this, and offered to accompany me himself with his friends, in case any unavoidable event should oblige me to go out. I felt truly grateful for so obliging an offer, and embraced him with every token of friendship, and overwhelmed him with acknowledgments. He was not behindhand with me in politeness, and though he very much approved of my reasons for confining myself at home, he seemed to think that I must lead a very tiresome life, and

recommended me to travel; he mentioned Venice, Bologna, Pisa, and Florence, assuring me that I should find each of those places well worthy of my inspection, and concluded by remarking that I could return to Rome, whenever I thought proper, after the disagreeable affair had blown over.

I gave Sayavedra to understand that nothing could be more to my taste than what he proposed, and that I should not hesitate to follow his advice, provided I could gain the consent of my master, as I wished to be ruled by him in everything. Then this imp of Satan, who was both Andalusian and Valencian, and who had, I daresay (according to his own account afterwards), been a native of half the cities of Europe, gave me such an engaging description of all the places he mentioned that my inclination to visit them increased vehemently. My thoughts were so occupied with this scheme that the ensuing day, as I was dressing the ambassador, I spoke to him in these words: "I do not know, my lord, if you will approve of a design which I intend to execute if I obtain your permission. I wish to make a tour of Italy, and indeed I think it would not be amiss if I were to absent myself from Rome for a short period." His excellency could not repress his joy in learning these words.

"Guzman," cried he, "I am charmed with the scheme beyond measure; yes, my friend, you will act wisely to keep out of sight for a few months, it will be serviceable to both of us. I am not ignorant of the reports which have been circulated

to my disadvantage, in consequence of your late adventure, which has, in fact, made us the jest of the city. I have been confidentially informed of it. In short, we must separate. I have often wished to tell you so, but could never resolve to undertake so disagreeable a task. Depend upon it, Guzman," continued this excellent master, "you shall find yourself in a situation to travel in affluence to any country you may wish to visit: you will be treated as a servant whom I esteem, and I part with you with sincere regret."

When the ambassador had concluded, I returned him a thousand thanks for his favourable opinion of me, and for his kind intentions towards me; and I had no sooner left his apartment than I despatched one of the scullions for the carrier of Sienna. I had already begun to pack up my clothes in three trunks which had served for my wardrobe, when Sayavedra, whom I already reckoned among the number of my friends, paid me a visit. He affected some surprise at the sight of my clothes and effects, all spread out in my chamber, and my trunks open before me.

"Ah, Signor Guzman!" cried he, "do you then intend to follow my advice?"

"You have guessed right," answered I. "I have mentioned my intention to my master, who has given it his hearty concurrence. Everything is decidedly fixed upon. I purpose in two days' time to quit Rome for Sienna, where I shall make some stay at the house of a friend of mine, a merchant of the name of Pompey. I am not personally acquainted

with him, but he has in his letters testified so much gratitude for some services I have had it in my power to render him in this city, that I have no doubt that he will be delighted with an opportunity of repeating his acknowledgments to me at his own house. So that I expect much pleasure in my stay at Sienna, whither I am going to send forward my baggage to-day, addressed to the care of Pompey, that I may not be encumbered with it during my journey."

If Sayavedra paid all possible attention to this information, he certainly paid no less to me, for while I was packing up my clothes in the trunks, he took exact notice where I placed those of the greatest value, and that he should see that I was possessed of such pleased my foolish vanity and love of parade. A gold chain, some valuable jewels, and three hundred good pistoles, which I had hoarded up during my stay at the ambassador's, did not escape his observation. I had wholly quitted the gaming table, and I had saved up with the utmost frugality every present that had been made me. Would to Heaven that I had been destined to reap the fruits of my improved behaviour; but, alas! that happiness was reserved for thieves, and not for me. I filled the other two boxes with what was of less value, and having carefully locked them, left the bunch of keys upon a table that stood by. We then continued our conversation, until a lacquey came to inform me that I was wanted by a person below. My room not appearing to be in a fit state for receiving company, I begged my new friend to excuse me for a few

minutes while I waited on the person who wanted to speak to me. It was the carrier, whom in the bustle I had almost forgotten having sent for. I told him on what day I should set out, and that we might agree on the sum he was to charge for the carriage of my baggage, I took him upstairs to show him of what it consisted. Meantime Sayavedra had done the deed. This rascal, seeing the coast clear, took the impression of my keys on some wax, which I suppose was part of the ammunition he always carried about with him, and seeing a letter lying by, which he knew I had just received from Pompey, he impressed that also into his service. I showed my trunks to the carrier, who lifted them up, that he might judge of their weight. I gave him what he asked for their conveyance to Sienna, and he withdrew, saying that he would return immediately with his people to help him away with the boxes, and would set out with them in three hours' time. He had no sooner quitted the house than this friendly Spaniard offered to take leave of me under a pretence that his visit retarded the preparations I was making for my journey. It was to no purpose to assure him that he by no means incommoded me, nor even to press him to stay and take breakfast with me; nothing could prevail upon him to stay, as he was upon the rack of impatience to go and order the false keys.

"At least then, my dear friend," said I, "acquaint me with your place of abode. I can by no means think of quitting Rome without returning your visit."

He replied that he would rather dispense with that ceremony, and gave me to understand, with a very mysterious air, that he lived privately with a lady, and for reasons, which as a man of honour he must conceal, he was under the necessity of debarring himself the pleasure of receiving the visits of his friends. As after hearing this I could urge him no longer, I suffered this favourite of the ladies to depart, who, no doubt, hastened with all speed to his companions, to consult on the measures they should adopt to get possession of my trunks. He was in league with four rogues, who had for their leader a famous and notorious thief, called Alexander Bentivoglio. He generally conducted their enterprises, and assigned to each the part he was to play, sustaining the chief character himself. But on this occasion he yielded that honour to Sayavedra, who, being a Spaniard, appeared to him the most proper person to represent a Castilian. As they were well provided with disguises of all kinds, they dressed themselves in character, and set off the next morning for Sienna, which they reached on the following day. Sayavedra, followed by two of the others dressed in livery, put up at the best hotel in the town, and gave himself out as the gentleman in waiting to the Spanish ambassador. As for Alexander, who was well known for a rogue throughout Italy, he did not dare to play the part of a third lacquey, but thought proper to lodge elsewhere with the fourth cavalier of his company. Sayavedra, putting on a lofty air, desired to be conducted to the best apartment in the hotel, and

having taken possession of it, sent one of the people to inform Signor Pompey that his friend Don Guzman had just arrived post from Rome, but was so fatigued with his journey that he begged to be excused waiting on him at present. Pompey, delighted at the arrival of Don Guzman, hastened to pay his devoirs to a man to whom he was under so much obligation. He flies to the hotel, and is shown into a fine chamber, where he sees a cavalier reposing himself upon a couch, who, seeing him approach, runs to meet him with open arms.

"Ah, Signor Pompey," cries he, "I flatter myself that you will pardon the liberty I took in sending my baggage to your house."

"I can readily excuse that," replied Pompey, with a smile, "but I shall not so soon forgive your coming to this place in preference to my house."

"You are extremely polite," replied the false Don Guzman, "but, upon my honour, riding post has fatigued me so much that I could not think of being so troublesome."

"For that very reason," replied the merchant, "you would have been more comfortable at my house."

"Another reason, too," continued Sayavedra, "opposed the desire I had to alight at your door; I am merely passing through Sienna. To-morrow I set out for Florence by the order of my dear master, who has given me some commissions to execute in that place, wherefore I thought it best not to give you the trouble of receiving me for so short a visit; but, to make amends," added he, with a gracious smile,

"I will return in a few days, and promise myself the pleasure of making some stay with you."

Pompey did not let slip this opportunity of pressing him to take a supper and bed at his house, though but for a single night, but he declined it with so much earnestness that the merchant, fearful of offending him, dropped the subject, after which he prepared to take his leave, assuring him that he would not fail to return in the morning to see him again before his departure, and wish him a pleasant journey. Upon this, Sayavedra cried aloud to one of his valets—

"Here, Gradelin, take these keys; they belong to my trunks. Signor Pompey will have the goodness to allow me to send to his house for the clothes and linen which I shall want during the next eight days. Don't forget," added he, "to bring the dressing-gown, which you will find in the largest box."

"Would it not be better," interrupted Pompey, running inconsiderately into the snare, "to let the trunks be brought here to you, when you can take out what you want at your leisure?"

"You are quite right," said the false Guzman; "I will make up a parcel of those things I shall absolutely want, and put them into the smallest trunk, which I can carry with me to Florence, and I will send back the other two, which I shall be much obliged by your taking care of till my return."

The merchant then quitted the hotel, and half an hour after my dear trunks were carried thither by the companions of Sayavedra and one of the grooms, accompanied by a person who presented to the false

Guzman a present from Pompey, consisting of a basket of fine fruit, and half a dozen bottles of excellent wine. Sayavedra received this present with all the politeness imaginable, and dismissed the bearer with a small gratuity for himself and a thousand thanks for his master.

No sooner were the trunks conveyed to the hotel than Alexander Bentivoglio, who had already learned the success of the scheme, hastened to the spot. The false keys they had obtained opened two of them, and they picked the lock of the third, which contained my money and jewels, which they divided among them, or, to speak more correctly, which Signor Alexander appropriated to himself; for he was a bully who awed the rest of the gang, so that he gave them just such a share of the plunder as he chose to part with. All that they received was thirty pistoles each and the least valuable clothes. After which he filled the smallest trunk with what remained for his share, and had the other two crammed with straw and stones. Then, that no time might be lost, he despatched one of the band to hire post horses to start by break of day for Florence. This accommodation was easily procured by these worthy gentlemen, who, when they paid the innkeeper, ordered him to send back to Signor Pompey the two trunks which they left at the hotel.

While this fine game was playing at Sienna, I was employed very busily at Rome in bidding farewell to my real friends, without the slightest suspicion of this trick. Nothing now remaining

but to bid adieu to my master, I entered the room with a sorrowful countenance, and, after having assured him that I should never forget his kindness towards me, I threw myself at his feet and kissed his hand, which I bathed with my tears. He was as much affected as I was, and testified extreme regret at parting with me.

This excellent nobleman exhorted me to a virtuous course of life in as earnest and paternal a manner as if he had been speaking to his own child. He even embraced me, and throwing round my neck a gold chain which he usually wore, he told me "that he gave it to me as a memorial of his affection." He added to this proof of his friendship a purse of fifty pistoles, and one of the best horses in his stables. All the servants followed his example in expressing their unwillingness to part with me : in truth, I had never done them any ill offices with my master, but had often rendered them services, so that there was not one of them who had just reason to complain of me. I will not pass over in silence a strange event which took place in Rome the day previous to my departure, though it has no relation to my own adventures.

The ambassador had just finished supper, when a Neapolitan gentleman, who often came to that hotel, suddenly entered our room. He had all the appearance of a man who had met with some unpleasant occurrence, and addressing his excellency—"I am come, my lord, to acquaint you with a very extraordinary incident, which I have only just heard, and

which, as you may see, has really affected me not a little."

"I am anxious to hear what it can be," replied my master; "hand the gentleman a chair, Guzman:" and the Neapolitan, being seated, began the narrative that follows:—

DORIDO AND CLORINIA.

AN EPISODE.

A gentleman, a native of this city—as high born and accomplished as he is brave and handsome, and of whom, I daresay, you have heard—named Dorido, fell in love with a lady, the fair Clorinia, not more than sixteen or seventeen — beautiful, virtuous, and also of a good family. She received an excellent education, and her charms, both of person and of mind, shone with redoubled lustre by the extreme care and polish bestowed upon her manners and her attainments of every kind. Her surpassing beauty, which none could gaze on with impunity, made her parents cautious how they permitted her to appear in public, lest some quarrel might arise among those eager to win her regard; for which reason either her father or brother was seldom seen absent from her side.

Already, for some months, had young Dorido seen and loved her; and such was the passion he entertained for her, as wholly to absorb his mind, and lead him, by seeking every occasion for looks and

signs—all by which he was permitted to address her, to convince her of its reality. These soft and voiceless witnesses of his love were not always fortunate enough to be regarded, but when they were, they seemed to produce a favourable effect upon the object of them. Clorinia took pleasure in secretly observing him, far more than she let it appear that she did; but soon, without knowing exactly why, she felt equally interested in attracting his regard, till, by degrees returning his silent advances, she caught the sweet contagion she had before communicated to him, and, for the first time, felt the young emotions of love and jealousy as he had done.

It was impossible Dorido could be long ignorant of the conquest he had meditated, and for a period he gave himself up to the delighted assurance of being beloved. But soon sighing for more substantial proofs of his success, he sought for the means; he contracted an acquaintance with her brother, Valerio, and so far won his confidence as seldom to be seen out of his company. They continually visited each other, and Dorido had now ample opportunity to contemplate the charms he so much admired, and even to speak to and to hear her speak. Still he could not declare his feelings; and their eyes were the sole interpreters of their secret wishes.

Things, however, did not long remain in this position. Clorinia could not conceal her love from her favourite maid, a girl of some experience, and one who wished to show her devotion to her young

mistress. With this view she went of her own accord to find the lover, and said to him—

“Señor Dorido, you are very handsome, and it would be foolish in me to conceal what it would be still more foolish in you to conceal from me. I see into your heart; you are in love with Clorinia, and you are not the only one that loves. You are both dying to be left alone together, and I truly pity your case. I shall have no rest till I invent some expedient to give you this happiness.”

The lover, enraptured to hear these words, thanked the kind creature from the bottom of his heart, declaring, that if she succeeded in what she promised, she would find him anything but ungrateful for the boon. He then sat down, wrote an impassioned letter, full of love and gratitude, which he conjured her to deliver safe into the hands of her fair mistress.

Scintilla returned home, and, holding the billet in her hand, told her lady the object of her embassy; for which, though she received a sharp chiding, she was soon with no great difficulty pardoned. How and where the lovers were to meet became the next question. The young lady, declaring it to be impossible, wished to give up the idea; but her ingenious maid hit upon a method which she could not but agree was extremely deserving of a trial. Scintilla was in the habit of occupying a little low apartment, adjoining another set apart chiefly for the lumber of the house, and which received light only through a small grated window, through which a person was barely able to insert his hand. It opened upon a

very lonely unfrequented quarter, which seemed to have been made expressly for the rendezvous of two lovers on some quiet night.

When the duenna found her young lady inclined to put her new theory into practice by means of this little grated window, she went and acquainted the gentle lover, who, that very same evening, about eleven o'clock, found himself close to the place. He saw the window, he saw the good duenna, and she preached patience to him—at least till the rest of the domestics should have retired. Yet he did not sigh there long; the delightful moment was at hand; Clorinia appeared in all her beauty, though trembling in every accent and in every nerve. Her lover, too, could not utter a word. They came to tell their love, and the excess of their joy prevented it; but love has more than one language; the lady's hand was extended through the envious bars, was grasped, and instantly covered with a thousand kisses.

By degrees they recovered the power of speech; they gave full vent to the emotions by which they were governed—the delight of hearing each other speak and being together. The morning would thus have found, without interrupting them, had not the watchful guardian of their love informed them of the lapse of time. Before bidding adieu, Dorido conjured his mistress to permit him to return on the ensuing evening, at the same hour, to the same spot; and this she had not either the courage or inclination to refuse him.

Both were equally enraptured with their meeting,

and sighed with equal ardour to repeat it. Dorido was in a state of impatience and agitation which would not permit him a moment's repose ; and he counted each minute until the promised one arrived that was to restore his Clorinia to his sight. The lady was equally true to it, and this night, with less timidity and alarm, their mutual joy seemed to be more intense. A lively conversation ensued ; in which each, eager to display the superior charm of a well-adorned and accomplished mind, as well as of person, exerted themselves to the utmost, and not a few were the sprightly and happy allusions and more delicate compliments they made and returned each other. The interview continued more than three hours, and you may suppose was not unmingled with vows and innocent caresses. Such was the charm of this meeting, as to render it again imperative on the prudent attendant to remind them of the hour ; and it was some time before she succeeded in rousing them to a sense of their danger, and tearing them from each other's sight.

The only other person acquainted with Dorido's passion was a Roman gentleman, named Horazio, who, unknown to his friend, was extremely attached to the same lady. Perceiving, however, that he made no progress in her affections, he conjectured that there was somewhere a rival, perhaps more fortunate than himself ; and it was not long before his suspicions were directed towards Dorido, from the circumstance of his being seen so frequently in the company of the brother. To ascertain at once how

far he was correct in his supposition, Horazio went directly to Dorido, with whom he was in daily habit of intercourse, and addressed him in these terms—

“I am come, my dear friend, to ask you a particular favour, such as, I trust, you will not refuse, for my peace of mind depends upon it. I see you continually with Valerio, you are very often at his house, and I suspect that you are smitten with the beauty of his lovely sister. Let me appeal to your candour and kindness,—if it be as I think, reveal the fact, for you are too worthy and noble for me to dispute with you the affections of this enchanting and accomplished girl.”

“You are, then, yourself in love with Clorinia?” inquired Dorido with an anxious air.

“I am most certainly charmed with her,” replied Horazio; “but I am just and sensible enough to allow that you better deserve to obtain her regard.”

“In that I should feel myself especially honoured,” said Dorido; “but, all flattery apart, I will tell you candidly that it is not my intention to solicit the hand of the fair Clorinia.”

“Is that possible!” exclaimed Horazio quickly; “is it not your object to become the husband of Valerio’s sister? Ah, my friend, how different do we feel then,—how I long to unite my fate for ever with hers! And, indeed, if such are your ideas, I think you ought to resign any other views or intentions you may have formed, in favour of my more lasting, more honourable claims. As my friend, you will do as much, I know.”

“And as the friend of your Clorinia’s family, you might have added,” rejoined Dorido, “in that point of view I assuredly ought. Yes, I will leave the field open to you; and if Valerio’s sister consent to bestow her hand upon you, I, for one, will not oppose your success. Nay, I will do more: I will speak to her in your favour; and, as far as it may depend on me, my embassy shall not be a bootless one.”

So delighted was Horazio with this frank and generous conduct on the part of his friend, that he was at a loss for words to express his gratitude, not reflecting that the promise given was conditional, and made to depend upon the lady’s own choice. In short, such was the illusion of his joy that he repeatedly pressed his friend to urge his cause as if it were his own, and with so much earnestness and tenderness of manner as really to interest the feelings and pique the generosity of his more favoured rival. He felt the power of virtuous love; and, doing justice to the purer motives of his friend, Dorido resolved to sacrifice his more licentious passion, to accomplish the lasting happiness not only of Horazio, but of the lady’s family and of herself.

In pursuance of this object, on their next interview, Dorido thus addressed the lady to whom he had before made so many professions of unalterable love—

“You are doubtless not ignorant, madam, that you rank in your long list of conquests a gentleman named Horazio; but I am very doubtful if you are aware to what an extreme degree he is

captivated with you. He actually idolises you, and the bare idea of ever becoming your husband is the sole and sweetest dream of his existence, without which he declares that life has for him no charm."

"I am delighted at what you tell me," replied Clorinia, "for now I shall have an opportunity of showing you what little regard I pay to the adoration of all the lovers in the world—except—except one."

"I feel," replied Dorido, "all the value of such an acknowledgment, every way so noble; but, at the same time, I should be undeserving of this exceeding goodness were I not, in a manner, to take up arms against myself in defence of one of the best and most amiable and generous of friends. Horazio's merit is great, and when you come to appreciate it rightly, you would probably not much regret it if your parents were desirous of bestowing you upon so excellent a man!"

"How then," exclaimed the beauty, with a look of extreme surprise and even terror, "do you wish to yield—to destroy me? Can you be in earnest that you wish me to return Horazio's passion?"

"No, truly," replied Dorido, "that is not my idea; I only wished you to understand that if you bore him any affection, and your parents had resolved to give him your hand, it would have been bootless in me to complain; I would then make a sacrifice to the happiness of my rival, in order to show how truly devoted I am to all your wishes. Do you comprehend me?"

"Do I?" replied the lady bitterly; "I know

that I would not fall a victim so submissively as you appear to think ; or your attachment has lost much of the fidelity, the ardour, which I believed it to possess. But," she continued, "I wish not to put you to this proof. Dorido has been the first and will be the last of the lovers I wish to have ; on that, at least, you may depend. Let Horazio persist or not, as he feels disposed, in his pursuit of me—he will not gain any more in my esteem ; and I wish you to understand that as my fixed determination. I was before aware of his views, and I have ever since conceived an aversion for him, amounting to absolute horror, and for which I can hardly account."

Dorido no longer ventured to say a word in his friend's favour, he saw that it was worse than useless to press the subject upon her attention. He changed the conversation, which took an interest of another kind, exhausting itself in the most tender and passionate exclamations on the side of Clorinia, which renewed all Dorido's ardour, and no fewer protestations on his.

On the ensuing morning, Horazio called upon his friend—

"You have seen Clorinia?" he exclaimed, "and spoken in my favour ; and how did she receive it?" was the breathless inquiry he made.

"In very ill part, indeed," replied the other, "and you must not continue to flatter yourself with the least hope. I said all I could to raise your merit in her eyes ; your person, wealth, family—but all in vain. I described to her the excess of your attach-

ment, greater, most likely, than it is; but the cruel creature stopped my mouth, vowing that, though you loved till the day of doom, you should never be united in marriage bands with her."

On hearing these words Horazio grew deadly pale, and seemed lost in profound thought; while struck with the extreme pain he appeared to suffer, Dorido, softening his tone, beseeched him to summon more resolution, and desist from a vain and fruitless pursuit, adding that in Rome there were many as lovely girls as Clorinia, who would not require to be compelled to return his love. "Besides, my dear Horazio," he continued, "I am sure you have not the slightest cause to complain of me; I would have yielded her to you, I swear, had I seen the least probability of her indulging an inclination for you. I would have made this noble sacrifice to our friendship; and will you, on your part, refuse to relinquish an anxious, painful undertaking, and which, in the remote case of succeeding, must be at the expense of your best friend?"

It was now for the first time Horazio broke silence, and fixing his eyes on his friend—"I am very far," he said, "from reproaching you. You have rendered me a sad and useless service; you have spoken for me, and I thank you for it. It is only just, I agree, that I should renounce the pursuit of what I cannot obtain: her heart is yours,—and so let it be. Farewell! and I will try to attend to your advice about attaching myself to some other more attainable object."

With these words he left his friend Dorido in the persuasion that, struck with the justice of what he had said, he would leave nothing untried to banish the thought of Clorinia from his mind. It was not so; he had set down his friend Dorido as a traitor, a false, malicious, selfish hypocrite, who had betrayed him, drawn a hateful portrait of him before the lady he adored; and he now resolved to take the matter into his own hands. "By heavens!" he exclaimed, "I will ask her; I will have her in marriage from her father; he will plead for me better than a rival." He proceeded forthwith to act upon this suggestion; he declared his wishes, and they were accepted and approved. He also obtained his own father's consent, and the two old gentlemen soon sat in council upon the business, the result of which was that the marriage should take place, provided the inclination of the lady could be brought to accord with their own views.

On the first mention, however, of the affair, such was the extreme repugnance and even horror manifested by the beautiful Clorinia, that the design was as quickly abandoned as it had been formed, as a thing wholly impossible.

How lamentable the folly and weakness of man, to let a single passion obtain mastery over his mind until he becomes no longer the same being, and, yielding up the helm of reason, is borne, like a lost vessel, upon the rocks! Horazio imagined he saw his passion treated with scorn, his rival happy and triumphant; and, in an instant, the love which

before animated his soul became changed into bitter hatred. He now regarded Clorinia as an object of horror, and brooded over thoughts of revenge. He next began to study the means, and how he could strike most surely and deeply at the hearts of both, and at a single blow. He set a vigilant guard upon their proceedings, a wretch hired to dog their steps whithersoever they went; and having thus discovered the place of their stolen interviews, with every circumstance attending them, there remained little else requisite to supply him with the most strange, cruel, and heartless method of revenge that ever entered into the human breast. Actuated by his infernal hatred, he one night, anticipating the arrival of Dorido, hastened to the place where they met, and approached the little window, at which he already beheld looking forth the object in pursuit of which he had come. In the obscurity of the evening he knew that the sister of Valerio would easily mistake him for her lover; and, in fact, she addressed him in the most affectionate language, in words that made Horazio's blood boil within him, and impelled him to deep revenge.

In perfect silence the treacherous friend approached; he stretched out his hand, he clasped that of the lady eagerly meeting his, and holding it with a ferocious and gigantic grasp, he had the heart, with a sharp instrument prepared for the purpose, to separate the lovely limb from its arm. The act was momentary; vain were her shrieks; the villain had fled. He already sat in the gloom of his secret

chamber, and in the deeper gloom of his soul madly exulting in the thought of his triumphant revenge.

But what were the horrorstruck feelings of the family and friends of that fair girl when, roused by her cries, they found her deprived of consciousness and bathed in her blood? Her faithful attendant hung over her, still filling the house with her shrieks. On beholding the deed her parents both fell unconscious at her side, while the unhappy brother and the servants were busily endeavouring to staunch the bleeding wound. It was no time to doubt, to inquire, or to accuse; the most eminent surgeons were summoned to the spot, to attempt, if possible, to arrest the unhappy lady's fleeting breath. The aged father, being meanwhile recovered, besought his domestics, for the ends of justice, to reveal nothing without orders; while he sighed over the lost honour and happiness of his house. Her brother, Valerio, having armed himself, now issued into the street, attended by his valets; and what was his grief at being enabled for some distance to track the murderous villain by the drops of his dear sister's blood, for the wretch had borne along with him the bleeding hand as a trophy of his secret crime. While thus employed he met his friend Dorido, who was hastening to his accustomed interview with an air of visible joy. In faltering accents Valerio called to him—

“Alas! my dear friend, whither are you going? Help us, for God's sake, help to find the murderer; for I see by your looks you know nothing of

the horrid deed. Our poor Clorinia—my sister”—but words failed him, and he could not go on.

“Gracious God!” cried Dorido, “what has happened—quick—answer me—what of Clorinia?”

“That,” replied Valerio, in a voice of solemn anguish, “that we ought to conceal from every human ear and eye, but to you it shall be told, because I know as my friend that you will unite with me in hunting down, whithersoever he flee, the cruel assassin of my poor sister.”

Pierced to the heart by these words, Dorido nearly sunk under sudden terror and surprise. Then, trembling and faint, he begged Valerio to explain everything, which he did; and Valerio would then have conducted him to the surgeon, had he not resolutely resisted, exclaiming, “It is no time now for aught but revenge. She will be lost to me; but I will drag forth the unheard-of villain to light, monster as he is! Leave me to deal with him, for I feel this visitation as bitterly as you can. It is impossible to think of it without shuddering; but, heavens! with what delight shall I inflict upon him a punishment as near as may be commensurate with his fatal crime!”

The two friends then separated, Dorido returning to his own house, in the resolution of taking some immediate step to avenge his outraged love, and full of indignation against Horazio, whom he more than suspected to have committed the atrocious deed. He first shut himself up in his room, where he gave free vent to his feelings on so severe a loss; for he had now become more deeply attached to the fair

Clorinia than before. "My lost, my beauteous one!" he exclaimed, "my envious, hated rival hath indeed succeeded, hath snatched thee from my arms for ever! Alas! you mistook him for your Dorido; and I—I am the sad cause of the calamity that has befallen you. But for me you had been happy and beautiful as ever, in all thy sweet innocence and tranquillity of soul! Yes, it is I who have been thy assassin! Yet will I not long survive thee, when once I shall have immolated thy wretched destroyer to thy dear and sacred shade! Would only that thou mightest survive, to enjoy the only consolation left us now—to hear of the memorable doom to be inflicted by this right hand upon the body of the traitor!"

The next morning found him still absorbed in grief and tears; but then, rousing himself, he hastened to the house of Clorinia's father, where sorrow and consternation sat on every countenance. The father and the brother seemed to feel fresh grief on his appearance. The old man, as he welcomed him, observed—

"Alas! Dorido, my friend, my sweet girl is even now in the agonies of death. She has lost so much blood that alone it is enough to forbid every hope. Was there ever a more unfortunate father? What can have been the motive, think you, for the commission of so accursed a deed? It was no man, it was a horrid monster; and what punishment can be imagined adequate to reach it?"

"Sir," replied Dorido, "try to assuage your grief, and feel quite at rest on that head; to avenge her is

the object of us all. I have undertaken to chastise him; he will perish. But ere that, give me a legal title to become her avenger; I love Clorinia as my own soul; unite our hands ere she breathes her last sigh. Thus, too, will her reputation not suffer; and you will not owe to a stranger that satisfaction to which you are entitled."

Without hesitation the father, as well as the son, accepted the proposal; they extolled his honourable feeling, and expressed gratitude for the noble manner in which he had stepped forward to obviate all unpleasant remarks that might affect the poor girl's reputation. The old man, weeping, took his way to his daughter's bedside; and a delightful smile played over her countenance when she heard what was requested. She signified her assent amidst tears of mingled bitterness and joy. She declared that she should die contented as the wife of Dorido; she inquired eagerly if he were at the house, and if she might be permitted to see and speak to him. This, as the fever appeared to have left her, it was conceived might not prove injurious to her; he approached; but so great was the sudden joy she experienced on beholding him that she fell into a swoon, from which it was some time before she recovered. The surgeon upon this gave strict injunctions that the lovers should not be permitted to speak to each other; but their looks sufficiently told what they felt and suffered. Observing that his presence appeared to afford her relief, he did not leave her during the remainder of the day. In the evening a

priest and a notary were called in, and the marriage ceremony was performed before the assembled and weeping family.

For the two ensuing days feeble hopes were entertained of her life. She seemed to rally, and even the surgeon no longer despaired; but all were disappointed. On the third day, a fresh access of fever, of a more rapid and violent character, seized on the patient, and left not the remotest chance. As her last hour drew nigh, Dorido, perceiving that the event must occur, secretly withdrew, and set about the means of his premeditated revenge. He sought Horazio in every spot, and at length meeting with him, he took him cordially by the hand, and, as if quite unsuspecting of any crime attaching to him, he carelessly asked if he would come and sup with him that evening, to which Horazio consented, conceiving that as he had heard no public notice made of the atrocious deed, the lady was either recovering, or his friend unacquainted with her misfortune. At the appointed hour Horazio went, as he had been accustomed, to join his friend, and both were soon seated opposite each other at the table. Dorido had, however, taken care that the wine should be well drugged; and such was its potent effect that in a very little time Horazio found himself overpowered, and fell into a deep slumber.

It was now that Dorido, assisted by his two valets, wholly devoted to his interest, bound the sleeper both hand and foot; they next slipped a cord round his neck, and with this and another passed round his

body they fastened him up to a pillar which stood in the apartment. Having before closed all the doors in the house, they now proceeded to administer antidotes to his lethargy, which speedily recalled the unhappy wretch to a sense of his situation.

The moment he found himself awake did the dreadful truth flash conviction and horror to the soul of the assassin, he knew in a moment wherefore he was there and what he had to expect. He did more—he confessed his heinous crime, while he implored compassion and mercy in accents of bitter sincerity, such as only the love of life even in a convict can inspire. But here they were all in vain; steeled to the heart's core, the lover and the husband—bereaved so barbarously of his charming mistress—listened to his prayers and cries with mockery, his imagination being still haunted with the picture of his dying wife. Bent upon inflicting retributive justice, he proceeded to sever with an axe the hands of the wretched Horazio; and while still in all the agonies of approaching dissolution, he commanded his valets to strangle him with the rope that bound him to the fatal pillar. Then having hung the two dissevered members round the neck of the corpse, he directed them to bear it to the exact spot where the fatal deed had been committed, and on the same fearful night, unable to support the idea of life in a place connected with so many horrors, he took his departure from Rome. Pursuit was vain, it is not even known what route he took, to what country he has flown; but I have been

assured that the unfortunate Clorinia breathed her last about three hours after he disappeared.

Here the Neapolitan gentleman paused; no one spoke. A story altogether of so tragic a nature seemed to have made a deep impression upon the ambassador, no less than upon all present who had listened to it, and who most unfeignedly deplored the fate of the unhappy lady. They also blamed Dorido in no measured terms, while the whole agreed, on reflecting further on the subject, that in the conduct of both these Spanish cavaliers there appeared a spirit of revenge, and a reckless daring—a savage love of blood, in no way compatible with the character of the true knight or of the true Christian.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

GUZMAN LEAVES ROME, AND ARRIVES AT HIS FRIEND POMPEY'S HOUSE AT SIENNA, WHERE HE HEARS BAD NEWS.

THE day subsequent to this sad catastrophe, which was the general subject of conversation in Rome, I took my leave of that city, well mounted, but poorer, alas! than I imagined. Assuming a consequential air, and anticipating much pleasure, I

proceeded towards Sienna, where I imagined my friend Pompey would be most anxiously expecting me. Having arrived there, I repaired straightway to his house.

He was at home, and received me in a civil manner, though not without evident embarrassment.

"Signor Pompey," said I, embracing him, "your friend Guzman can scarcely express his extreme joy at being at length introduced to your personal acquaintance."

My very name seemed to astonish him.

"How," answered he with surprise, "can you be that Guzman to whom I am under so many and such great obligations?"

I was almost frozen by these words, for I knew they could portend no good.

"For what possible reason," cried I with emotion, "can you be so much astonished at seeing me?"

"You will soon know that to your cost," replied the merchant. "I see plainly that I have been duped, and that you are in reality that Guzman d'Alfarache whom I expected."

These words were like a thunderbolt to me, and I instantly foresaw that some accident had happened to my property. Impatient to discover the truth, I entreated Pompey to explain himself more clearly.

"Well, then," said he, "you must know that there has passed through Sienna a cavalier calling himself gentleman to the Spanish ambassador, who came hither from Rome, followed by two servants, on his

road to Florence with despatches from his master. This spark introduced himself to me as the Guzman d'Alfarache who had been of so much service to me in my late lawsuit, and he had in his possession the keys of your trunks."

I thought I should have fallen into convulsions even at these words, but a more circumstantial detail of the whole adventure drove me almost to madness. I requested to be allowed to inspect my trunks. He conducted me immediately to the chamber prepared for my reception, and, pointing out two large ones—

"There are the two that are left behind," said he, "but even these have been in their power as well as the third."

I sighed bitterly when I recollected that my gold and jewels were in the one that was missing. I failed not, however, to open the others, and should have been somewhat appeased if the thieves, satisfied with having my money, had not meddled with my clothes; but no such consolation was in store for me.

In justice to Pompey, I must acknowledge that he was not less afflicted than myself when I informed him that I had been robbed of two thousand crowns. After all, however, his affliction may have been principally caused by the fear that I should hold him accountable for the loss of my property, whatever he might be able to urge in his own justification. So far from thinking of making him uneasy on this point, however, I tried all in my power to conceal the grief which consumed me. It appeared to me

that a man who wished to assume the carriage of a gentleman ought not to show much vexation at the loss of his clothes. Nevertheless, I was really half distracted, and Heaven knows I had reason enough, not being in possession of another coat except the one I had on, nor any linen but two shirts in my portmanteau.

In vain did I rack my brain with conjectures as to who could be the person who had taken the impression of my keys. I knew not whom to suspect. As for Sayavedra, I esteemed him too sincerely to entertain the slightest mistrust of him. It was not Pompey's fault, however, if I was so long in discovering the thief ; for as, in his relation of this affair, he described the person of the false Guzman, he gave me an exact portrait of Sayavedra : the figure, the hair, the voice, and the manners were all his. So prejudiced was I in his favour that I should have thought it quite a crime to have suspected him on account of the resemblance. I will say more : though I remembered that I had left him alone in my chamber when the carrier of Sienna came to look at my boxes, my respect for Sayavedra was proof against the recollection of even this circumstance.

While my host and I were making very useless reflections upon my loss, a servant came to tell us that supper was ready. We accordingly went down into the parlour, and sat down to table with gloomy faces, and without much inclination to eat. Pompey, perceiving that this vexatious affair had completely taken away my appetite, said to me—

"Signor Guzman, your property is not so entirely lost as to render its recovery quite hopeless. I have not been idle. The bargello, who is a friend of mine, has undertaken the pursuit of the thieves, and I assure you I place great reliance on his exertions. He will return this evening or to-morrow, and I trust he will be the bearer of good news."

"I hope so too," answered I; "but, between ourselves, I don't think that much confidence ought to be placed in persons of that kind, especially in an affair where restitution is to be made."

Though the table was covered with well-dressed dishes and excellent wine, we were so little inclined to eat or drink that supper was soon over. As I pretended to be very much fatigued, my host conducted me to my chamber, and soon withdrew, to my great satisfaction, for I found his conversation very tiresome. I spent part of the night in pacing my chamber absorbed in meditation, and did not retire to rest till near daybreak, when my mind was so overwhelmed and fatigued with the different thoughts that agitated it by turns that at last I fell asleep. My slumbers were soon disturbed, a loud noise on the staircase awoke me suddenly, and I heard several persons vociferating at the same time—

"The thief is taken! the thief is taken!"

I drew back the bed-curtains, being scarcely able to believe my ears, and I was going to rise, that I might know what to think of it, when in rushed the merchant's whole family, wife, children, and servants, all speaking together, and repeating what I had heard

before. I requested the wife to explain the meaning of all this.

"It means," said she, "that the bargello is expected in the course of an hour with one of the thieves in his custody; he sent one of his attendants forward to give Pompey notice of it, who is dressing himself that he may wait upon you."

My host was not slow in bringing this man before me, to whom I put some questions, and he informed me "that the thief who was taken was he who had sustained the character of Guzman."

This news revived me a little, and I began to flatter myself that I should recover at least a part of my effects, since we had apprehended the thief. Pompey also indulged the same hopes, and the whole family evinced the greatest joy at this fortunate event. I gave a pistole to the man who had ridden all the way at full gallop to bring me the news, and hastened to dress myself, that I might recognise the scoundrel who had personated me. Pompey also prepared to accompany me, that he might speak to the magistrates in my favour.

While we were conversing on the subject a servant came to inform us that the bargello was at the door on horseback, and that his myrmidons were conveying the thief to prison. The merchant sent a request to the provost that he would alight and favour us with his company upstairs.

The bargello, as great a scoundrel as ever was born, marched in with an air of triumph. First of all he related to us the intrepid manner in which he had

secured the thief, and made me quite impatient by long digressions which did little honour to his modesty. I interrupted his heroic recital to inquire what was of most importance to me to know, namely, whether he could give me any information respecting my money.

"As for the money," said he, with an air of great nonchalance, "he had about him but five-and-twenty pistoles, which is not much to be wondered at. Though he played the chief character in the piece, he is not at the head of the gang. That honour belongs to a certain Alexander Bentivoglio, of whom I have heard but too often, and who may yet some day fall into my clutches; however," continued he, "console yourself, the scoundrel who is the cause of your misfortune is in our power, and I promise you that he shall be hung."

I could scarcely repress my rage at this impertinent discourse. I fairly wished them all at the devil together—the provost who talked to me in that manner, his man who had cost me a pistole, and the merchant who, by his imprudence, had placed me in this embarrassing situation. I began to be angry in good earnest. The bargello, perceiving that so far from thinking of rewarding him as he expected, I was highly dissatisfied, took his leave very much displeased with my lordship, and telling Pompey that if he had known that I should have received his services so ungratefully, he should not have taken much trouble about the affair.

As soon as he was gone Pompey called for his

cloak, and expressed an intimation of going to solicit the judges. As for me, I had a great curiosity to see the thief who was in prison, and, having repaired thither, it was with no small astonishment that I recognised Sayavedra, though he had been accurately described to me. He threw himself at my feet the moment he saw me. He was as pale as death, and earnestly begged me to pardon him.

"My dear Signor Don Guzman," cried he, drowned in tears, "have pity on a wretch who sincerely repents having betrayed you."

He was going on in this strain, for he had prepared a long harangue to excite my pity, but I did not allow him time to say more. I loaded him with reproaches, but even while I thus reviled him I felt my anger growing weaker every moment. All the feelings of indignation which agitated me gave way insensibly to emotions of pity, which I should have been weak enough to have suffered him to perceive, had I not hastened from the presence of a traitor who would at least have been condemned to the galleys, if the administrators of justice in Sienna had acted with a little wholesome severity.

The judges of that period, however, as you will soon perceive, acted as a thousand others have done before them, and ten thousand since. The next day they sent to me one of their clerks to propose that I should bind myself to prosecute the prisoner. I answered that I should be very ready to do it, provided that they would engage that my lost property should be restored to me; but that otherwise I would not;

that I did not wish for the death of the offender, and that hanging him would not at all replenish my purse; in short, that I wished for nothing but my money and my clothes, and that I had given up all hopes of them, since they were in too good hands for me to have any chance of regaining them. The clerk had no sooner reported to the judges what I said, than, considering that there was no more spoil to be gleaned from this affair, except the pistoles which they had taken from the thief they had secured, they satisfied themselves with condemning him to the pillory for two or three hours, and perpetual banishment from Sienna. These upright magistrates urged in defence of so mild a punishment that, as the culprit had no marks of branding on his shoulders, it was a proof that he had never been guilty before, and that consequently he deserved some indulgence. A pretty reason this for suffering a professed thief to escape! And is it not a most judicious arrangement to banish him from the country where he had robbed? It was as if they had said to him, "Go, friend, and rob elsewhere."

I did not yet know what punishment the judges intended to impose on Sayavedra, and I was at dinner with Pompey, when one of his servants, who had heard the sentence pronounced, rushed into the room quite out of breath, and cried out, with as much apparent satisfaction as if he had announced the restoration of my property—

"Huzza! Signor Don Guzman, the thief who has robbed you is condemned to the pillory and the iron

collar, and he is just now going to be fastened into it. It will be your own fault if you do not witness his punishment."

I regretted at this moment that this fool was not my own servant, and that I was not at liberty to knock his teeth down his throat for it; for if ever I was tempted to strike a man, it was upon this occasion. I was obliged, however, to endure this mortification, as well as the cold treatment which I experienced from that time from my host. He changed all at once from one extreme to the other, and looked upon me only as a stranger who incommoded him, and whom he wished to get rid of.

Is it possible? you will say. What! the Pompey to whom you had been so serviceable, and who in his letters professed himself so sincerely obliged,—could this very Pompey repay you with ingratitude? Alas! it was but too true. He assumed all at once a cool and distant air, and gave me to understand by his behaviour that he desired my absence. This conduct was owing in a great measure to my telling him that I should not return to Rome for some time. He concluded from this that I should not have it in my power to render him any further service, and in all probability, as we should have no continued connection between us, he was quite indifferent as to whether I was dissatisfied with him or not. He even went so far as to ask me without ceremony when I intended to proceed on my journey. I answered him that I should set out the next day; upon which he replied, with a distant air, that he was

sorry to part with me so soon, though he never made the slightest motion to press me to stay any longer. I was not a little vexed to think of having taken so much pains to oblige a man who felt so little gratitude, that far from offering me any assistance to make me some amends for what he had caused me to lose, he was so unfeeling as to count the minutes with impatience until I was out of his house. So that the first thing I did the next morning was to take leave of Signor Pompey, and I took care by my manner towards him to let him see the opinion I entertained of his conduct.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

SOON AFTER HIS DEPARTURE FROM SIENNA GUZMAN MEETS WITH SAYAVEDRA, WHOM HE TAKES INTO HIS SERVICE AND CARRIES WITH HIM TO FLORENCE.

I WAS so anxious to escape from Sienna that, clapping spurs to my horse, I disappeared like lightning from the eyes of the ungrateful Pompey. After proceeding some miles I perceived at a distance a man on foot, who appeared exactly to resemble my thief Sayavedra. In fact it was he, who, in pursuance of his sentence of banishment, was hastening to quit the territory of Sienna to exercise his talents in some other place.

I could not help feeling an emotion of pity at the sight of this miserable wretch, and thinking less of his treachery than of the infinite assistance he had rendered me in the hog adventure, I could not refrain from speaking to him. He also had recognised me, and when I came near him, ran up to me bathed in tears, and, clasping my knees, he entreated me a thousand times to pardon his ingratitude and his perfidy. He added that he wished with all his soul to expiate his crime, to be my slave for life, and that if I would receive him I might rely on his oath that he would be the most faithful servant in the world. After I had reflected on this proposal, I thought I had better accept it.

Do you not blame me, friendly reader, for encumbering myself with an attendant whose character I was aware of, and who had already robbed me, and would not fail to give me another specimen of his skill the first opportunity? I know by my own experience that evil propensities are not so soon got rid of; but now that from my own poverty I had nothing to lose, honesty did not appear to me to be an indispensable requisite in a servant. In the profession that I foresaw I should soon be obliged to follow, I should, I knew, have occasion for a virtuoso, and Sayavedra was one exactly for my purpose.

I took him therefore into my service, and I had as good reason afterwards to congratulate myself on having renewed my acquaintance with him, as I had before to regret that I had ever known him. He soon convinced me, when we arrived at the inn

where we intended to sleep, that I had acted most wisely in attaching him to me. He was always on the alert to contribute in every way to my convenience, and I could not sufficiently admire the attention with which he endeavoured to anticipate my every desire. In short, his extreme zeal, good understanding, and spirits conspired to console me considerably for the loss of my goods. Very early the next morning we set out again, one on horseback and the other on foot, and proceeded to Florence, which I had heard so highly spoken of. Praised, however, as it had been to me, the magnificence of its buildings amazed me exceedingly. Sayavedra, who observed my astonishment, said to me with a smile—

“It appears to me that you are somewhat agreeably surprised at the sight of this city.”

“In truth, you have guessed rightly,” replied I; “I am completely charmed with it; I did not think there was another Rome in the world.”

“And yet,” replied he, “you see nothing of its beauties to what may be seen. Some of the houses here, which might pass for as many palaces, are ornamented within with some of the most beautiful works of architecture. Florence may with great truth be called the eighth wonder of the world; since it is the flower of flowers and the flower of all Italy.”

Sayavedra then related to me the history of Florence from the time of the civil wars of Catiline.

My squire Sayavedra, who was well acquainted

with the town from having lived there some time, conducted me to one of the best inns, where he was pleased to make me pass for a Spanish gentleman, named Don Guzman, and nephew to the ambassador from Spain to Rome. With the greatest effrontery he communicated my quality to the landlord in confidence. Being without baggage, and having only one horse between us, seemed to belie his assertions; but, to throw something like the appearance of probability on his story, he said that we had been obliged to set out in great haste, and that we expected a servant to follow us instantly with our trunks. Although the inn was full of gentlemen of the first importance, I was shown into one of the best rooms, the landlord having been given to understand that I had come to Florence on an affair of consequence, and that I should probably make a long stay; this caused him to behave in the most respectful manner to me.

The next day the prudent Sayavedra was of opinion that we ought to buy a large chest, and give out that it contained our most valuable property, though intending to fill it at our leisure with whatever fortune might be pleased to send us. I approved of his idea, and charged him to make the purchase immediately.

CHAPTER XXXV.

*GUZMAN APPEARS AT THE GRAND DUKE'S COURT,
WHERE A LADY FALLS IN LOVE WITH HIM.*

THE Grand Duchess had lately been brought to bed of a prince, or, rather, she was just recovering from her accouchement; and there was an entertainment every day at the palace, where all persons of distinction of both sexes did not fail to resort. The cavaliers who lodged in the same hotel with me, and who were of the first class of nobility of the country, being only come to Florence to join in those diversions, were so much the more assiduous in their attendance, as by these means they made their court to their prince. My host inquired of me, the first evening of my stay, whether I would eat by myself or with those gentlemen. I replied that I would do myself the honour of supping with them, and, when the time came, I entered the room just as they were seating themselves at table. I assumed an easy carriage and affected the man of consequence, of which I was quite capable, and after I had saluted them politely, I seated myself at the upper end of the room in a chair which was handed me by Sayavedra, who performed his part of the ceremony to admiration.

This bold step attracted the attention of all the company present, who, wishing to know who I was, were uselessly employed in inquiring that informa-

tion of each other in a whisper. They were most impatient to hear me speak, hoping to discover my nation by my accent. I was malicious enough to keep them in doubt even on this point. In vain did they endeavour to provoke me to speak by little attentions at table; I answered all their civilities either by most gracious looks or by an inclination of the head. Being obliged, however, to utter a few words, I passed in their opinion for a Roman; but afterwards giving orders to Sayavedra in Spanish, puzzled them as much as before.

One of these gentlemen, more curious than the rest, rose from table in order that he might go and interrogate the host as to who I was. In a few moments he returned to his seat with a satisfied air, and whispered something to those next him, and they to the others; and I was in a short time recognised by the whole party as the nephew of the Spanish ambassador.

As soon as supper was over all the company, looking upon me as a young nobleman, crowded round me, and one of them, addressing me, said—

“Perhaps I was not aware that there was almost every day a ball at Court, on account of the birth of the young prince; that there would be one held that very evening, and that if I had the least wish to go, they would have the pleasure of conducting me to the palace.”

I replied that it would be most ungracious in me to reject so polite an offer, though, indeed, my travelling clothes formed some obstacle to the grati-

fication of my curiosity; but that, nevertheless, as I was not known at Florence, I would have the honour of accompanying the party to partake of an amusement of which I was exceedingly fond.

All the party, except myself, were very elegantly dressed; as to me, I did nothing but change my shirt and adjust myself a little. Ill-dressed as I was, however, in comparison with the others, you will hear what happened to me at the ball.

When we entered the saloon, the duke and a large party were already assembled there. His Highness fixed his eyes on me immediately, and this somewhat disconcerted me. I thought that he was either displeased at the plainness of my dress, or found something ridiculous in my person; and what convinced me the more was, that he pointed me out to a courtier who stood by him, and, as I imagined, desired him to ascertain who I was. I was not wrong in my conjecture; the courtier, whom I did not lose sight of, made his way through the crowd and accosted one of the gentlemen whom I had accompanied, whispered something to him, received an answer in the same manner, and then returned to the Grand Duke, to whom I saw him give an account of his commission. All this appeared to me equivocal enough, and I did not know what to think of it, when the same gentleman who had been addressed by the courtier approached, and said to me—

“You are known, Signor Cavalier; the Grand Duke knows that you are a relation of the ambas-

sador from Spain to Rome. I should advise you to go immediately and salute the prince; he looks at you continually, and seems to wish that you should take that liberty."

I followed the gentleman's advice, thinking that I could not do less; and accordingly advanced towards the Grand Duke, who, perceiving my design, was so condescending as to advance halfway to meet me. I commenced with a most profound bow, and, addressing His Highness, told him in Italian, in an easy but respectful manner, "that I had but just arrived at Florence, and I trusted he would pardon my presumption for having ventured, even in a ball-room, to offer him my most humble respects; but having been informed that it was his desire to know my name, I had come to announce it to him myself."

"I know it already," answered the prince, "and I am not a little surprised to hear a Spaniard speak Italian as well as a native of Rome."

To this remark I answered in Spanish, that I had long resided in that city. He replied, in the Castilian language, that he never heard any one of my countrymen pronounce Italian so perfectly.

Then, turning the conversation on my uncle the ambassador, he told me he was well acquainted with him from having had many affairs of consequence between them, and that he should be most proud to testify his respect for him in my person. He then invited me to frequent the Court, with a thousand other compliments, to which I could make

no other answer than by bowing almost down to the ground. This was not all; the Grand Duchess came up at that moment, and I had the honour of being presented to her by the prince her husband, who told her at the same time who I was; and I verily flatter myself that I got out of this dilemma in better style than, perhaps, the real nephew of the Spanish ambassador would have done in my place.

The ball then commenced, and I retired from where I stood for fear of incommoding the dancers. After three or four dances, a lady came up and was introduced to me by the duke's desire. I affected to wish to decline dancing, though in fact I was particularly desirous, and pleaded in excuse, that I had not long alighted from horseback, as might be seen by my frightful dishabille. The prince, who heard me, put an end to the contest by crying out that he was sure I could not refuse so lovely a lady, even were I to dance in boots. At this desire I instantly obeyed, and my dancing attracted the attention of the whole company. The Grand Duchess especially, who preferred Terpsichore to all the other Muses, was so much pleased that she requested me to dance some of the newest figures, in which I acquitted myself equally well. This exhilarated my spirits to such a degree that I made love to all the ladies in company. I would tell you, moreover, friendly reader, were I not fearful of being deemed conceited, that of all the women in Italy the Florentines understand genteel behaviour the best, and I was by no means badly received among them.

Among the rest there were three young ladies present, who were decidedly the ornaments of the ball. I never saw more perfect beauties. It would have puzzled any honest man to have made his choice of one of them. I soon decided, however, in favour of a brunette, who attracted me by a certain *je ne sçai quoi* which the others did not possess. I attached myself to that lady only during the whole ball.

One of the gentlemen who had brought me to the palace, perceiving my penchant for this brunette, approached me.

“Signor Don Guzman,” said he with a smile, “how many lovers will you distract with jealousy this night, if you continue your attentions to that lady, who is a rich widow, and has a great number of admirers.”

My vanity was flattered by this information, which inspired me with the design of attempting the conquest of a heart which was disputed by so many rivals. I hazarded some soft speeches which were not ill received, but while my favourable progress inclined me to push my success, the Grand Duchess, who had not danced since her confinement, took a fancy to do me the honour of choosing me for her partner. In fact, foreseeing the consequences, I did all in my power to avoid it; but she would take no denial. The Grand Duke, though he approved of the great respect I paid the princess by my diffidence, gave me to understand by a nod, that he wished I would comply with the desires of Her Highness; so that there were no means of escaping. I danced and performed

even better than before, which pleased the duchess so much that she would not leave off dancing with me, until the prince was obliged to beg her to desist, lest so much exertion should injure her health.

Their Highnesses then retired, and I accompanied them to their apartments, together with the lords of the Court, and returned with an air of impatience to the ball-room, when I found the pretty brunette was also about to retire. I made love to her with so much ardour that I had the pleasure to see that she quitted me with regret. As soon as she was gone I returned to the hotel, with the before-mentioned gentlemen who had rejoined me. I was so taken up with the honour that had been conferred on me that evening, that I said but little in answer to the compliments they paid me on my talents for dancing. On our arrival at the hotel we took leave of each other with great politeness, and retired to our chambers.

When I was alone with Sayavedra : "My friend," said I, "my joy overpowers me, I must ease my heart." At the same time I recounted to him all that had happened at the ball, where I had been so much distinguished, the infinite praise bestowed on me by the duchess, and my flattering reception from the duke. My confidant cared for nothing but what was solidly advantageous. Praises he looked on as smoke, but the account of the widow charmed him. His eyes sparkled with joy when I mentioned her to him.

"Think nothing of the rest," said he ; "this may turn

out to your advantage if you know how to profit by the favourable impression you have made on that lady."

Sayavedra and I employed half the night in building castles in the air on this subject, and in deliberating what course we ought to take to bring the affair to a happy issue. It was resolved in council that on the ensuing day we should procure the large trunk we had, spoken of before and that I should purchase as splendid a suit as my purse would afford, to enable me to sustain at Court the character I had already assumed.

This resolution was followed by my giving strict orders to Sayavedra to be in the field early the next morning to put our plans in practice, after which I went to bed. Not that I could close my eyes during the whole night, for it was already day when, by rocking myself so incessantly with chimeras, I fell asleep for a short time. Sayavedra, who had returned from executing his commissions, came into my room and awoke me. He was followed by a tailor, at whose shop he had found a suit ready made, which had never been worn. The tailor told me that it had been ordered by a young nobleman, who had suddenly disappeared from Court after having lost a large sum of money by gaming, and that he desired nothing better than to get rid of it at a fair price. I got up directly and tried it on, and most fortunately it fitted me as well as if it had been made for me. Nothing was wanting but to fix the price, which we agreed on after a dispute which would have lasted longer if the tailor had not wanted money, and if I had not

had an earnest longing for the suit, to which he added some gold lace to correspond, which completed it in the fashion of dress at Rome.

I had no sooner paid and sent away the tailor, than my host came up and informed that the Grand Duke had sent me, while I slept, a present of wine, fruits, and sweetmeats. This was a compliment that this prince was in the habit of making to the illustrious foreigners who visited his Court. The landlord added that he would not disturb my repose to acquaint me with it. I was not sorry that I had not seen the gentleman whom the duke had sent with this present, as I must have paid pretty roundly for the carriage; and I could not be too frugal, considering how much I should need money to enable me to make any appearance at Court. I thought then that I should escape this expense, in which I was a little mistaken. Scarcely had my host ordered the prince's fruit and wine to be brought into my chamber, when His Highness's gentleman was announced to me. I was obliged to endure a commonplace harangue, which ended in informing me that the duchess hoped to see me in the afternoon. I made upon that an abundance of compliments to this gentleman, and Sayavedra, like a well-bred valet, attended him to the door to slip a few crowns into his hand. I amused myself then by trying on the rest of our purchases, such as silk stockings, a superfine hat, ribbons, gay shoes, linen, gloves, and every other necessary article of dress. Seeing that nothing was wanting, I began by shaving, combing, cleaning, and powdering myself;

then being dressed, and looking at myself continually in a glass, I turned towards my confidant to ask him if he thought there was anything wanting. He answered that I looked so well that he was much mistaken if I did not that day distract all the men with jealousy and all the women with love. I did not fail then to put on my elegant gold chain, and fasten below it with a ribbon a miniature portrait of my dear master, which he had given me the day before my departure.

I was like another Narcissus, enchanted with myself. I wished myself already at the palace, so desirous was I of showing myself off. I think I should have gone without any refreshment, if Sayavedra had not represented to me that it was necessary to take care of the inside, on which the outside depended; and that starvation was not very likely to improve my complexion. Though I had but little appetite—for I was puffed out with my dress, and my stomach might be said to be as full of wind as my head was—I suffered myself to be prevailed upon to eat a little of what my confidant ordered into my chamber. I was so fearful of soiling myself in eating that I was quite uneasy until dinner was finished. I tasted the duke's fruit, and drank a few glasses of verdee which had accompanied the fruits. I found this wine most excellent, and I did not doubt but it would enliven my conversation, if taken in moderation. After this slight repast, I walked up and down my room strutting about; I did nothing but question my squire as to my appear-

ance, and he assured me that I was a very mirror of cavaliers. Satisfied with this testimony, to which my self-love very readily assented, I repaired to the palace, attended by Sayavedra, who, to do me credit, had also made a few purchases for himself at the expense of my purse, which began now to look rather foolish after such copious bleeding.

I was received at the duke's palace with as many honours as could possibly have been conferred on the ambassador himself. The prince first complimented me on my good looks; he then began to speak of the ambassador, and communicated something to me in the hope that on my return to Rome I should repeat it to His Excellence. He was completely a man of the world, and never spoke but with some motive. I soon observed that he was anxious to engage me to speak of the ambassador's private affairs, but I was so completely on my guard against him that, though I stayed two hours, not a single indiscreet word escaped my lips. Finding his hints and flattery of no avail, he at length desisted, for fear of exciting suspicion in my mind, and proposed that I should pay my respects to the duchess.

I was exceedingly glad to be dismissed from a conversation which began to grow tiresome, and I went immediately to wait upon the duchess, who, after receiving me with great politeness, told me that she had been much delighted with my dancing the preceding evening, and especially with the two last dances, which she should very much like to learn. I replied that my humble ability was entirely at her

service, and undertook that she should be perfect in both dances before the next ball-night. She seemed to anticipate much pleasure in the general surprise she should cause in dancing these new figures, and desired that I would not speak of it to any one.

A fine concert was to form the amusement of the Court that evening, and I did not fail to appear there in all my charms, after having taken a slight repast at my inn. I need not tell you that my first care was to see if my charming widow was among the crowd. It was not long before I perceived her; her rich and superb dress, and superior charms to all around, could not long be concealed. I advanced towards her with an eagerness which seemed by no means to displease her, and we continued to converse together and admire each other, reciprocally exchanging the most tender looks for some time. All this was exceedingly pleasant, but still I was uncertain of my fate, and, thinking that I had no time to lose, I determined to explain myself more clearly now that I had an opportunity of speaking to her without being overheard.

"Madam," said I, in a voice timid but impassioned, "to what punishment would you condemn an insolent who could dare to tell you that he loves you?"

The lady blushed a little at this question, but answered that it depended upon who it might be, whether she could have resolution sufficient to wish him to be punished at all.

"In what a pitiable situation, then, am I," replied I, "in being prevented by the respect I owe to their

Highnesses, from this moment throwing myself at your feet!"

My charming widow answered only with her eyes, and I was myself so transported with joy that, being no longer able to speak, I remained silent for some moments, leaving my sighs to do the office of my tongue.

I had scarcely regained the power of speech, which my joy had deprived me of, when the lady, touching my elbow, said, with a confused air—

"We are observed; the duchess is watching us with an attention that embarrasses me; I request that you will withdraw a little distance from me."

I retired immediately, not without complaining of the princess's cruelty in disturbing the sweetest moments of my life. I then glided behind the duchess's chair, whence, as though I had been very attentive to the concert, I cried out—

"It must certainly be confessed that nothing can be better performed."

This was really true, for the duke had some of the best players and singers in Italy; but I had not heard sufficient to be able to decide on their merits, and the duchess, who well knew it, said satirically, "You have certainly been so extremely attentive to the concert, that you may boldly decide. But there is some excuse for you," added she, smiling; "the lady's charms are much more attractive to you than those of music."

Her Highness, observing that this embarrassed me, changed her tone, and asked me what I seriously

thought of the voices and performers. I then took the liberty of stating my real opinion; and if I did not answer like a master of the art, I at least made it apparent that I was not altogether ignorant of music.

In about an hour the concert was interrupted by a magnificent collation by way of interlude. I took this opportunity to return to my divinity, to whom I now publicly paid the most marked attention, in preference to the other ladies present; and my rivals now no longer doubted that I was the favoured lover.

Whatever malice, however, they might on this account nourish against me, they none of them dared think of being revenged on me, which they were well convinced the duke would make them repent of. For my part I cared so little for their displeasure, that I thought of nothing but of completing the conquest of my charmer. And love seemed willing to furnish me with opportunity; for just at this moment, a musician passing close by us, I called to him, and asked if he knew the two or three new airs that had lately been so popular at Rome.

"I received them only this day," answered he, "so that I have not yet had leisure to study them."

The ladies then asked me if I knew them. I replied in the affirmative; and no sooner did they signify that they should like to hear them, than, without waiting like a professional man to be further pressed, I began to hum them in a very faint voice, pretending that I did not wish all the company to hear me. No sooner had I begun, however, than I was surrounded by all the ladies and gentlemen near

me. My notes were not so very inaudible but that they reached the duchess's ear, who, advancing towards me, requested particularly that I would give my voice full scope.

I must not forget one circumstance. Her Highness made signs to my widow, and some other ladies of rank near her, to join the party to partake of the pleasure she anticipated. They advanced towards her directly; and the duchess, either out of malice or goodness, placed them in such a manner that my mistress stared me full in the face. After which she whispered to me with a smile—

“You see I am willing to pay you in advance for the favour you are about to grant me.”

At these words I bowed most obsequiously, and lest she should continue thus to tantalise me, I hastened to begin my song.

Have a care, friend Guzman, you will here be ready to tell me, or you certainly are going to praise yourself again. I confess that I am on the point of so doing, and since I have told you all my bad qualities, it is but fair that I should be allowed to say what I can in my own praise. My voice then was so much admired, that the saloon resounded with applause. And this is not much to be wondered at A man who at Rome had passed for a good singer, was not very likely to fail at Florence. In short, I amused the assembly until the fête broke up, when the duke and duchess withdrew to their own apartments, and I rejoined my widow, who was evidently waiting only to take leave of me. I had

just time to say a few sweet words to her, which were repaid with usury, and to request permission to pay my respects to her at her own house. This is usual at Florence, and was most gracefully granted. The lady even appointed an hour herself, than which she could not have paid me a greater compliment.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

SEQUEL AND CONCLUSION OF THIS FINE INTRIGUE.

WHEN I returned home, I thought myself obliged to give my counsellor Sayavedra an account of my fortune that day; even to the minutest particulars. After having listened to me with the greatest attention, he said to me—

“Everything goes well, and I do not doubt but the lady will fall into our snares.”

“Friend,” said I, “a prudent man is always in doubt about the event. When I think of the excess of my good luck, when I consider all the advantages of it, and please my imagination that in the course of two days I have reached the very summit of my wishes, I fear that fortune has hitherto flattered my sanguine expectation but to spoil and confound my rash undertaking by some sad disaster.”

"True it is," replied my confidant, "that the promises of hope are often fallacious, but yet sometimes they must be fulfilled."

I slept more soundly that night than the last, and as soon as I rose the next day I sent the present of sweetmeats I had received from the Grand Duke, except some fruits and a bottle of wine, to my beautiful brunette, thinking I could not make a better use of it. I added to it gloves, and all sorts of ribbons, which I had ordered Sayavedra to choose and buy for me. My present pleased the widow exceedingly, as well as the note I sent with it, and to which I was told she would in the evening give me an answer by word of mouth, at the lady's house, who expected to see me. Unluckily the hour appointed for that visit was nearly the same I had promised to be at Court to finish the lessons of the two dances which the duchess had begun to learn with me. To conciliate matters, I resolved to go somewhat sooner than I was expected to the princess's, in the hope of thus being able still to keep my appointment with the lady also. I was mistaken in my reckoning; Her Highness, who had a great desire to make herself perfect in these two dances, made me dance them so often with her, that it was not possible for me to take my leave of her for that happy assignation, the hour of which to my great sorrow was already passed, and caused within me the most expressive signs of impatience.

The duchess perceived it, notwithstanding all my endeavours to dissimulate.

“What is the matter?” said she; “there is something that makes you uneasy. I see what it is, your widow makes you think the rehearsal rather too long; is it not so?” I plainly confessed the truth, and owned the cause of my uneasiness, thinking by that she would let me go sooner, but she did not. On the contrary, she ordered me to remain with her; but, rather than lose my company, she sent for my lovely widow, ordering the messenger to make my excuses, and taking all the blame upon herself. Nothing could be more gracious; I returned Her Highness my thanks in the most grateful terms, and then recovering my usual gaiety, I repaid so much kindness by saying a thousand pleasant sallies, which made my conversation very agreeable to the princess. When the amiable brunette came, extremely pleased with the honour the Grand Duchess had done her, Her Highness told her that she had sent for her to make amends for the pleasure she had been deprived of while she detained me; then caressing the lady on my account, she said so many obliging and tender things in my favour, that it put me in confusion. We three then began a little ball, till the hour fixed for the great one, which no sooner arrived than we entered the ball-room, and as long as it lasted my mistress and I did nothing but exert ourselves to make our court to Her Highness, who was fond of seeing us dance together. From that very night our mutual love became public; every one looked upon us as a couple of happy lovers. My rivals alone thought otherwise.

The next morning I paid my widow the visit I was to have made her the day before. I found that lady in company with two of her friends, whom out of decency she had desired to be there, but who knowing well our mutual inclination, gave us opportunity to whisper our sentiments to one another; I heard from the lovely mouth of my peerless brunette, that from the very first minute she saw me, she had felt for me, what in vain her other lovers had endeavoured to inspire her with. In a word, I might without affectation think myself tenderly beloved. As there was no gala at the palace that day, their Highnesses being gone to honour an important wedding in the city with their presence, my visit lasted the longer. How many impassioned expressions escaped me! how many tender and obliging words did she favour me with! and how happy were we in each other's company!

It was late when I returned home. I was completely in love, and my mind so enraptured with fine ideas, that I could scarcely speak. Sayavedra suffered me to remain sometime overcome by this charming intoxication; but, seeing that my interest required it should be removed—

“My dear master,” said he, “you indulge yourself too much with the fair prospect of your amorous intrigues; you forget that we are in a town much frequented by travellers. You may chance to meet here somebody returning from Rome, and who may know you. Every minute you run the risk of being discovered. Take my advice and come to the point;

modesty of Suzanne,
Guzman

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know soon from your mistress how far your lucky stars will carry you, and lose no more time like a whining lover."

The prudence of my confidant restored me to my senses, and the next day I resolved to call upon my widow, fully determined to ask her consent to our marriage. I was afraid of spoiling all by being too hasty, and it was but with a trembling voice I entreated her to complete my happiness. Far, however, from opposing the impatient desire I evinced to become her husband, she confessed ingenuously that her intentions being similar to mine, she had not the least wish for delay.

"See my relations, in the first place," she continued; "ask their approbation, and after you have paid them that compliment, my consent shall not be wanting."

I threw myself at her feet in an ecstasy of love and joy, and taking her hand without any resistance on her part, I kissed it with rapture. I then entreated her to seal her promise by accepting of a small ring that I had on my finger. It was a pretty diamond, and extremely well set. She consented to it, and suffered me to put it on her finger, on condition that I should receive one from her in return. After this we talked as freely together as if we were already married. Indeed I believe I might have that very day attained the summit of my felicity, if I had been more bold; but besides that I was extremely fearful of giving offence, by betraying any guilty desires, I was too much in love, and had too much esteem for her, to be capable of such rashness.

When I returned from the house of my enamoured widow, and informed Sayavedra of the result of my last conversation with her, showing him the token of the promise she had given me, a tear of joy sparkled in his eye.

“Cheer up,” cried he, “the wind bloweth fair; you sail before it; proceed and enter the port. Do not fail to-morrow to visit your dear widow’s relations, for I am fully persuaded they will give their consent.”

There was no need to encourage me to it. My mistress had told me their names, and described their characters, that I might the better know how to address myself to each of them in particular. Two of them I knew already, who were about the same age as myself, and I made no doubt of securing them in my interest. But there were some grave, phlegmatic greybeards among them, of whom I was afraid. However, I saw them all that very morning. The two young sparks said presently that they consented with all their hearts, if my addresses were agreeable to their cousin. The uncles were not so easily prevailed upon. They said it was a family affair; that they would have a meeting soon, and would let me know in a day or two what had been resolved. Nothing was more prudent than this proceeding, and whatever sorrow such delay occasioned me, I could find no pretence to complain.

I went after dinner to my mistress to give her an account of all these visits. She told me it was enough; she expected the answer I met with, and that we might in the meantime regulate all the

marriage ceremonies and the wedding concerns, to have it performed with all the splendour suitable to persons of our quality ; as there was no doubt that their Highnesses would honour us with their company. After three days waiting, two of my future spouse's relations called upon me with an answer in the name of the rest, saying they all approved of the honour I designed their family, in entering into an alliance with their kinswoman, yet they could wish of me, for the greater decency of the thing, that I would condescend to engage my uncle the ambassador to testify his consent by a line to the Grand Duke, and a note out of courtesy to the family to ask their approbation. I was sadly vexed at these conditions, but collecting all my spirits to conceal the disorder I was in, I replied with unparalleled assurance, that if that was all that prevented our marriage, they should be soon satisfied. I promised to get from the ambassador not only general, but particular letters to every one of the relations. As to the Grand Duke, I told them I expected every post a letter from my uncle to His Highness, to desire his protection in the affair of my marriage, having written to the ambassador about it already. The gentlemen were mightily pleased with this answer, and took leave of me, fully relying upon the performance of my promise.

Thus had I brought a pretty load upon my shoulders with these letters, and the recommendation of the ambassador. Had I attempted by a letter to beg of him to make my fortune, in owning me for his nephew, God knows how His Eminence would

have caused me to be treated by the Grand Duke at Florence, and in what fine style he would have recommended me. Therefore I was by no means whatever inclined to adopt such a plan; I rather preferred, and indeed it was the only resource left to me, to make the last effort, by prevailing upon my mistress to marry me instantly. I flew to her house as soon as her old relations had left me; accosted her with a sad countenance, and related what had passed between us, and how I saw myself doomed to die with impatience.

"This delay," said my widow, "will not be so dreadful as you may think."

"Excuse me, Madam," said I, with the greatest emotion, "I may easily obtain from the ambassador to write in my favour to the Grand Duke, and to your relations; I may venture to say that he will give this proof of his regard for his nephew. But allow me to tell you, his temper is the cause of my fear. He has too much prudence and delicacy not to get information first about your family, and even about yourself, dear madam, if I may venture the word, for fear it might be only the amour of a young man. Such an inquiry will require time that will appear an eternity to me, and almost maddens me to think of."

I then expressed my sentiments on the subject, in a manner which I cannot now detail; for when a lover speaks from the dictates of his heart, he expresses himself at the time much more pathetically than he can afterwards describe to another.

All I now remember is, that my lovely widow was moved at my representation of the sufferings I should

endure by so long a delay; and being perhaps no less impatient than I was to bend to the yoke of matrimony, she replied, to comfort me, that she did not depend entirely on her relations; that what she had done was for decency's sake, and out of respect to them.

"I only desire three days' respite," she continued, "to get the consent of such of my relations as are the best disposed to it, and if unluckily they all oppose my design, we may be married privately, and leave them and Monsieur Ambassador to settle their business together afterwards by themselves."

It was not possible for me to hear words more kind, and my whole frame was in a rapture. In a word, I showed myself so sensible of her goodness to me, that I threw her into great disorder, and the lady would have willingly spared me the three days to hasten my felicity.

Who would have supposed that a day so agreeable would have been followed by the most fatal of my life! The next morning I rose to go to the church called Annunciate, one of the finest in the city, to hear Mass. Hither all the fashionable people of both sexes used to resort. I met there one of my mistress's young relations, who was inclined to the match. I accosted him, and we insensibly fell into a conversation upon my intended marriage with his cousin. Whilst I was talking with him, a beggar, whom I had already sent away twice without deigning to look at him, returned a third time to the charge to ask alms. Earnestly engaged as I was

in conversation so interesting, I grew impatient and struck him in the face with my glove.

“You rogue of a beggar, will you not let me be in quiet for you?”

The poor man, who expected quite a different sort of treatment from me, gave me this answer :

“O Mr. Guzman ! if you had been treated thus when you were a beggar like me, you would not have set up for a great lord as you do now.”

This man’s voice and words, which I heard and knew distinctly, struck me to the heart ; I turned my head about, and remembered he was one of my dear comrades at Rome, when I was one of their fraternity. I changed colour in an instant ; I blushed, and looked on him with eyes sparkling with rage and choler. But so far from being dismayed at it, he laughed and made mouths and grimaces at me, and muttered something as he retired. All the gentlemen that were round us, and especially one of my rivals who had heard in what manner the beggar had spoken to me, and observed that I was out of countenance at the sight of him, were quite surprised. My rival, who had more interest than any to know the bottom of this adventure, followed the beggar to the church door, where he stood to ask alms. He took him aside, and after having slipped a few pieces of money into his hand, asked him if he knew me, and how he dared venture to talk to me as he had done. The poor man, resenting yet the blow I had given him, and burning with anger against me, told him the whole history of my life, from the time of my com-

ing to Rome, to my leaving the ambassador of Spain. This gentleman, who had the greatest pretence of any of my rivals to the hand of my mistress, rejoiced to hear such a singular piece of news, and quite delighted with the information, he gave the beggar more pence, and bade him come to his house after dinner for a coat he meant to give him; he also advised him to keep out of the way for fear of me, who might perhaps revenge the affront he had offered me in the very sight of the church. As for him, he went up again to the widow's kinsman, and seeing that he was alone, for in the confusion I was in, I had thought proper to leave him, he accosted him, and burning with impatience to speak of me, he could not help giving him the information the beggar had treated him with. The lady's kinsman, somewhat disconcerted, only answered that he could not believe a word of what the beggar had said, who to all appearance took me for the wrong person.

The two gentlemen then separated; the kinsman with some suspicion that I was not what I appeared to be, and my rival triumphing in having made a discovery which was likely to rid him of his most dangerous opponent. It was half-past eleven, and consequently there was a great deal of company at the palace, it being the time when His Highness sat down to dinner. My rival soon appeared, and mixing among the company whom he thought most jealous of the favours I enjoyed with their Highnesses, told them as a secret all he knew of me, praying them, however, not to divulge the adven-

ture, under a strict charge of secrecy, on purpose, no doubt, that they should be the more eager to tell it, as in effect it happened; for in less than a quarter of an hour's time, it came to the duke's ears. This prince only laughed at it at first, and when he heard it was reported by one of my rivals, he took it for a tale invented by a jealous lover incited to it by despair; yet with his usual prudence, and as the Grand Duchess had behaved so kindly towards me, he was extremely anxious to know the truth of it. He commanded the beggar to be brought secretly before him to court, in order that he might hear him himself. He was obeyed; the poor man came, and the duke from behind the hangings heard the whole history without being seen. When the prince had listened attentively to the noble recital of these rare adventures, he commanded the beggar to be put in prison, where, however, he should be well used, with an order that nobody should see or speak to him till he was entirely satisfied on the subject.

If all this while I was not quite easy, at least I had not the slightest suspicion of what was in agitation concerning me. It is true that the cruel accident of the morning had caused me considerable concern; but I expected that by giving a sum of money to the beggar, I should have induced him to leave Florence, or at least obliged him to hold his tongue. I even returned to church as soon as Mass was over, in the hope of finding him, but as he was not there I put off speaking to him till the next day. As for what he had said to me, I was resolved to

turn it into a joke, if any one happened to speak about it, pretending that it was an insolent rascal that had abused me for using him a little scurvily. At last I had almost forgotten it, and went to court as I used to do after dinner. I desired to see the duke, but I was told he was engaged on particular private business. I then went to the apartments of the duchess, who they said would see nobody, being a little indisposed, and that there would not be any assembly that night. All this appeared quite natural to me, and well enough pleased that I should have all the afternoon and evening to pass with my widow, I flew to her house. There I found the door crowded with her old relations' footmen. I concluded there was a meeting of them on occasion of our marriage, so I let them alone, imagining my presence would disturb them. I made no stay there, and not knowing what to do with myself, I went straight home, to wait till the conference broke up. There I remained two hours, after which I sent my faithful confidant to my mistress, to hear from her the event of it. Sayavedra was told she was gone out. He went there again an hour after, but the answer was, she could neither see nor speak to any one.

Now indeed a dreadful scene opened before my eyes, and my heart became a prey to sorrow and vexation. My faithful squire endeavoured to comfort me, but all his reasonings and consolation could not banish from my mind the dismal thought that fear inspired me with. I went to bed without my supper,

and the next morning got up, having taken no rest during the night. I was just going to send a note to my widow, to desire the favour of her to let me know when I should come and see her, when my host brought me word that two gentlemen of my acquaintance wanted to speak with me upon business of some importance. I ordered that they should be introduced. These gentlemen entered with a sedate and serious countenance, and one of them addressing me said—

“We are come out of pure friendship to inform you that there runs a very odd report of you at Court and in the city. It is said that, far from being a man of quality, you have acted mean and different figures at Rome. In a word, you have been the ambassador’s domestic, and not his kinsman, as you pretend to be. We know not if the Grand Duke has heard of it yet; however, we would advise you as friends not to go to Court, but to procure the ambassador’s attestations in your favour as fast as you can, and prove the falsity of reports so much to your dishonour.”

When this gentleman had concluded his speech, so mortifying to me, I was thunderstruck, and ready to swoon away; my speech failed me when I began to make an apology. I answered, however, that I could not have believed my enemies could have carried their slander so far; but before the end of the day, I would take post and go to Rome myself, to obtain authentic attestations more than enough to confound the malicious plan of jealous rivals.

The two gentlemen approved of my resolution, and withdrew to make their report to the Grand Duke, for it was by his order that they had come to me, though they had pretended it was purely of themselves, and out of kindness to me. They were no sooner gone than my trusty friend entered the chamber, and guessing by my looks the afflicting news I had to relate, felt the greatest grief when I told him what was the matter. However, far from being cast down as I was by this misfortune, he bore up against it, and with a firmness that astonished me.

"Now, master," said he, "you must show yourself a man of courage and steadfastness. Can you be surprised, after having acted so delicate a part as you have done in the eyes of all the world, that some mischance should happen that gives a sad and gloomy turn to the plot of the play? For my part, I always expected it; but after all, our fall is not so great but we may rise again; thanks to your lucky stars, the free country is left open before you; let us make use of our time, and immediately leave Florence and the duke's territories, and betake ourselves elsewhere, to comment at leisure on this change of fortune."

This prudent reasoning restored me by degrees to my senses, and upon reflection I could not help thinking that I had deserved to be treated with more rigour than I had been. I told Sayavedra that his advice was too good not to be followed, and if we could set out post within an hour, it would be most desirable.

"Nothing is so easy," answered he; "your horse is sold, we are not without cash, and have only therefore to hire post horses, and begin our journey. Depend on me for providing everything for our departure."

"Well," replied I, "my friend, do what you think proper. Alas!" I continued, with a deep sigh, "could I but once more see my beloved widow, I should part contented!"

I expected Sayavedra would have opposed my desire, but on the contrary he assured me that he would procure me that satisfaction before we were ready to mount our horses.

While I was engaged in expressing to my confidant my satisfaction in having met with a man so entirely devoted to my interest, my landlord came and told me a young woman desired to speak with me. At first I trembled for fear, for the least thing alarmed me in the situation I was in. However I recovered myself when I found this young woman was one of my mistress's waiting maids, who brought me a note from my widow, containing these few words, "*I expect you at my cousin's to inform you of circumstances of the utmost importance: farewell!*" I desired the maid to tell her mistress I would call upon her immediately, and as soon as she was gone, turning to Sayavedra—

"See," cried I, "what I wished for is come to pass. I fear it will be painful to me to endure the conversation of a lady I am so much in love with, and whom I shall never see again. Be that as it may, however,

I must see her, though I die for it." I charged Sayavedra accordingly, to settle everything for me.

"Make not yourself uneasy," said he, "about anything, and you may expect that in an hour and a half at the most, I shall be with the post horses near about the house you are going to."

Everything being settled with Sayavedra, I hastened to my mistress. I found her in a dishabille, which betrayed more of disorder than of negligence; she looked dejected and pale; her eyes were still moist with weeping; in a word, she was so altered that she was not like the same person. On my part I was no less confused than herself. As soon as her cousin perceived me enter the room, she withdrew.

Now that my mistress found herself alone with me, she raised her eyes full of tears towards me and said—

"Have you heard all the frightful scandal that is reported of you in Florence?"

"Yes," said I, "I have been informed what horrid slander my enemies have circulated against me, and in an hour's time I take horse to return to Rome, and in five or six days I shall bring back such authentic proofs of the falsehood of their calumnies as to confound them."

These words somewhat relieved her. She then told me the substance of her relations' conference held at her house; all that the beggar had said; the terrible stories he had told of me to all that asked him anything about me: and concluded by reproaching

the curiosity of the Grand Duke, who could condescend to listen to so wretched a fellow himself.

I suffered the lady to talk as long as she chose, without interrupting her; for I was so confused, that I could not immediately make any answer to the purpose. I shrugged up my shoulders, raised my hands and eyes to Heaven, groaned, and made a thousand gestures, which persuaded her much more of the falsity of these reports, than all the powers of human eloquence.

“Do not suffer yourself to be afflicted immoderately,” said she with tenderness; “I have loved your person though your rank was unknown to me, and were you not what I think you are, I feel that I should still love you. Perhaps I should not have taken notice of the charms that I have observed in you, had I looked upon you at first as a person of low condition: my pride and my birth would not have suffered me to cast my eyes on such a one; but having once seen those charms I can never forget them.”

Her generosity and tenderness had so powerful an effect on me, that I fell down in a swoon. She thought I was dying, and it was with the greatest difficulty that she had strength enough to call her cousin, who had much ado to manage us both, and was obliged to call in the assistance of one of the waiting women. A minute after these two persons had succeeded in restoring me to my senses, I was told that my valet was in the ante-chamber and my horses ready. It was then that I found what it was

to love, and felt the pangs of parting with the beloved object. Never was there a more tender and moving farewell.

I was so little myself, and so full of sorrow when I left the house of our cousin, that I did not see Sayavedra who stood directly before my eyes, but passed by without speaking to him; he followed me, and observing I was almost distracted, spoke not a word, but led me where the horses waited for us. I mounted immediately, and galloped the whole of the first stage without speaking a word: but at the second my squire asked me if I had any object in travelling the road to Rome. I answered that I wished it to appear that I was going to that city, but at the next stage we would stop, and consult what was best to be done.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

GUZMAN TAKES THE ROAD TO BOLOGNA, IN THE HOPE OF THERE MEETING WITH AND PROSECUTING ALEXANDER BENTIVOGLIO, WHO HAD ROBBED HIM.

WHEN we came to the first stage, we stopped to take some refreshment and rest, which I stood very much in need of, having partaken of neither for the last twenty-four hours. After that we began to consult together.

"I think," said I to Sayavedra, "that we ought without delay to go to Bologna. I have some idea that we shall there meet Alexander Bentivoglio, and if it be our good luck to find him, I do not doubt but by composition, or a law-suit, I shall get part of my property again." My confidant confirmed me in my opinion, by saying, "Let us hire horses then, and set off to Bologna; but give me leave, if you please, to remind you of the danger I shall run in appearing in that town. I am fully of opinion as well as you that Alexander is there, and if, unluckily for me, he should see me there, he will be anxious to know what brought me to Bologna, and as sure as he discovers that we came together, he will suspect your design, and either run away himself, or get me assassinated. This is not all," added he; "I cannot be of any use to you in the business, without running the risk of my own neck; since I must suffer myself to be committed to prison; and once confined, shall never get out again, except by a special dispensation from Heaven."

I approved of Sayavedra's reasons, and we agreed that he should not appear in the streets of Bologna, but keep as closely concealed as he could in the inn where we should take up our lodging, and not meddle in the law-suit, in case I should institute any. After all, I did not imagine his testimony would be necessary to help me to get my thief compelled to restore at least part of my property. My confidant, pleased with this agreement, professed himself quite ready to follow me. We set off im-

mediately on common hacks, and the next day towards evening we reached Bologna. We alighted at an inn, where I found some strangers brought to that town by their several occupations. I supped with them and retired pretty early into a neat little room which Sayavedra had bespoke for me. I slept very little, all my thoughts being taken up about that rogue Alexander, and I rose early in the morning to inquire at once if he was not in the country. I went out by myself, and walked for a quarter of an hour about the streets. As I was passing before the great church, I cast my eyes upon five or six young fellows who were at the door, and I observed one among them whose coat impressed me with a strong suspicion that he was the man I was looking for. I at first mistrusted my eyes, but after a long examination, I knew for certainty that it was the coat which a Neapolitan officer had made me a present of, to whom I had been serviceable in speaking to my Lord Ambassador in his behalf.

I was so enraged at seeing this rascal bedecked in my finery, that it was with some difficulty I could restrain myself from running him through with my sword; but as his good luck would have it, or perhaps mine rather, my more reasonable thoughts prevented me. "Softly," said I to myself, "be not too hasty: let the gaol-bird live, and he may then possibly pay his debts; but if you kill him you will certainly be as much the sufferer as he. Besides those young fellows that are standing by him will of course take his part; and even if they should not

interfere, remember that he has the reputation of a bully, and you may not have fair play. At all events, instead of plaintiff, you would become defendant." Having thus fully convinced myself of the folly of exposing myself by such an action, which would have made my journey fruitless at least, if not fatal, I returned to the inn, and asked my landlord if he could recommend me an experienced lawyer. He answered in the affirmative, and immediately sent for one who lived in the neighbourhood, and who, considering his profession, was a tolerably honest man. I first inquired of this gentleman, whether he knew one Alexander Bentivoglio, son of a solicitor of the same name? He replied, "that there were very few who did not know both father and son." I then asked, "if he was any relation or friend to them?" "No, thank God!" answered he with some haste; "I should be very sorry to have any such relations or friends."

After these two questions, which I thought prudent and necessary, I told him the particulars of the loss of my trunks. He listened to me with the utmost *sang-froid*, and did not seem in the least surprised. He even owned to me, that in Bologna they were quite used to hear such adventures of Master Alexander, who frequently played similar games. "I am by no means certain, however," continued he, "even though you commence an action against him, that you will be at all the better for it. You will have to deal with a formidable opponent in his father, who has put himself above the laws by

the wickedness of his disposition, and rendered himself terrible to all the inhabitants of this city, who dread him as much as fire. The best advice I can give you, is to have a conversation with this father of his, who, perhaps, may rather choose to come to terms with you, than suffer such a piece of villany to be made public. This is the only probable way to recover any part of the property you have lost." I answered, "that I was of the same opinion; for, besides the dislike I had for law-suits, I considered that I should not get much by prosecuting a thief, and particularly one who happened to be the son of a man of such a character." I therefore requested him to call upon the father himself; but, as I found he did not wish to have anything to do in an affair disagreeable to counsellor Bentivoglio, I promised him a good reward for his trouble in case of success. He could not stand against this promise, and at once found resolution enough to go to Alexander's father.

My solicitor soon returned, but his looks showed that his answer was not satisfactory, and I could easily perceive, that his trouble had been in vain. He told me, that the haughty lawyer had used him very ill; that so far from agreeing to any terms of accommodation, he said that he felt his honour wounded, and was so offended at such a proposal, that he insisted that I was the thief, and his son the person who had been robbed, and ended his discourse with the most violent threats against me. I resolved then, since I was compelled to do it, to implore the

help of justice. The solicitor, good man, prayed to be excused; for his undertaking the cause would be the ruin of himself and family, the father of my adversary having threatened to send them all to the hospital, if he knew that either directly or indirectly he gave me the least assistance. "Recommend me then, at least," said I, "to some able lawyer." He was in doubt whether he would even oblige me so far as this, so great was his dread of the Bentivoglios; but observing that I pulled some money out of my pocket to pay him for his trouble, he named a counsellor of great experience and probity; and what was more, a secret enemy of my adversary's, but he desired me not to mention who had directed me to him.

I went accordingly to this gentleman, told him my case, and how I had been robbed at Sienna. As soon as I had finished, he said, the whole city of Bologna was already informed of this adventure. Alexander returned home laden with clothes, which, it was reported, he had won of a young Spaniard at Rome, but it was well understood at what game he must have played to get them. "Do not lose time," added he; "carry on the business briskly; I do not doubt that justice will be done to you, in spite of all the exertion of old Bentivoglio to the contrary." I replied, "that I depended entirely on his integrity and capacity, putting myself and my cause into his hands, not doubting that he would act in the business so that I should have no occasion to repent of having come to Bologna." He assured me, that he would

do his best; and that I had only to take a walk in the town, and call upon him three hours after; which I did. When I returned, I found my declaration ready drawn, with a true recital of the case, arranged much to my satisfaction.

We went together and gave it to the magistrate called *El Oydor del Torron*.* The more I observed my lawyer, the more was I convinced that he went regularly to work, as much to maintain my rights as to vex his brother lawyer Bentivoglio; but whether this latter had been aware of my designs, or that he was an intimate of the auditor or register, no sooner was my declaration against Alexander delivered in, than he had a hint of it, and another was presented against me before the same magistrate in the name of the lawyer Bentivoglio, setting forth that I had defamed his son, requiring damages for the injury done his reputation, and further that I should have corporal punishment. My lawyer said that was nothing; "if Bentivoglio," said he, "has no more skill to show us than this, we have not much to fear; we shall be able to answer him when the auditor has answered our petition," which he soon did. But in what manner? good heaven! by ordering that, within three days at the furthest, I should produce my evidence of the robbery of which I accused Signor Alexander Bentivoglio.

Had I despatched a man express to Sienna for a copy of the allegations mentioned in my declaration, I could not have had an answer in so short a time.

* The Auditor of the Tower, or Judge in criminal cases.

The auditor could not be ignorant of this, since in my petition I had expressly declared that it was from Sienna that I expected my strongest proofs. My lawyer remonstrated in a second petition, that it was against custom to prescribe a fixed time to the plaintiff. By this he hoped at least to maintain a longer time, but he was again disappointed. Not being able now to doubt any longer the connection that subsisted between the auditor and the honest man I had to contend with, he said to me with the utmost confusion, and blushing at the horrible injustice I met with in his own country, "I have no other advice to give you but to quit this town; it is not safe for you to remain here; I see but too well the wicked trick they have served you; you will only spend your time and money here to no purpose, and I am not sure that you will even get off at so cheap a rate. In one word, you are a stranger: and I blush to confess that everything is thought lawful here against foreigners."

"Is it possible?" said I, in a tone expressive enough of my indignation; "sure we are not at present in a country of barbarians." "Yes, worse than barbarians," said he, "for among them, justice is administered according to the law of nature, but here we have no law at all. I repeat it again," continued he, "my advice is, that you tarry no longer in a part of the world where the chief magistrates are so little scrupulous as to make the guilty pass for innocent, and treat the innocent as guilty."

I promised my lawyer that the very next day I

would follow his advice. I thanked him for the pains and trouble he had been at, and pulled out my purse to recompense him, but he declined taking anything from me. "You have lost enough already," said he; "if I were to take any fee from you, I should deserve, I think, to be considered as one of those whom you have to complain of. Besides, I wish, that in quitting the city of Bologna, you may be convinced that though rogues are abundant, yet there are a few men of honour to be found in it."

I returned to my lodging, mightily pleased with the frank proceeding of my lawyer, and found Sayavedra in no small fear, lest I should sacrifice him to recover my goods. Undoubtedly, if I had produced him in court, it would at once have defeated the arts of old Bentivoglio; but it never entered into my heart to be guilty of such a piece of treachery. I had forgiven him, and since that time he had served me so faithfully, that he left me no occasion to remember what he had done. I told him that our law-suit was finished, though no judgment had been given upon it; that we had but to seek our fortune elsewhere, and that, as I intended to set out for Milan the next day very early in the morning, he had nothing to do but to hire post-horses, and prepare everything for our journey. I had scarcely finished giving these orders to Sayavedra, when there entered the inn a great number of bailiffs and bailiffs' followers,—a trade the devil would not be of. They made no more ado, but took me by the collar and hauled me off to prison. I asked for what I was committed,

and what I had done to merit such usage? I was answered I should know in good time; which I did indeed, and found that it was for the crime of having been robbed, and that I should be very lucky if I got out of prison by being sent to the galleys. That counsellor Bentivoglio, in order to punish me for my insolence in bringing an action against his son, and presenting petitions that were looked upon as defamatory libels against the nobility of his family, and more particularly against Signor Alexander, whose morals and good manners were so well known in the city of Bologna, had obtained from the justice of the auditor a warrant to arrest me, until I should be adjudged a punishment suitable to my rashness.

This notable accusation took up a whole sheet of paper, and all the while I read it I raised my hands and eyes towards Heaven with looks of astonishment to the great amusement of the gaoler and his companions, who laughed heartily in their sleeves at me. I remained two or three days without seeing anybody but the keeper and his men, who wantonly insulted me, and made me their laughing-stock. This place appeared to me to be the true picture of hell. I should have been starved had I not had money, and as it was, I paid for what I had at least three times its value. In addition to this, I was obliged to keep on terms with the goaler, who, out of an excess of civility, constantly visited me at my meals, ate up half of what I had paid for, and afterwards had the impudence to say he did not honour any other prisoner so much as to give him his company.

Sayavedra, who, for the reasons I have before mentioned, dared not appear in the town to solicit for me, employed my landlord, who, moved with compassion to see me so ill used, went to my lawyer to prevail upon him not to give me up to the wickedness of my enemies. This counsellor, like a charitable and generous man, indignant at the tyranny that was exercised, in contempt of the laws, against a helpless stranger, again espoused my cause, to get me out of the clutches of these robbers; and, to avoid an ignominious sentence, he advised me to consent to an accommodation proposed to me by the adverse party, and which I shall not fail here to mention. They made me sign a paper containing in substance a recantation of my charge against Signor Bentivoglio, and a declaration, drawn up in excellent form, that I knew this same signor to be a very honest gentleman, of a moral life and irreproachable honour, begging his pardon for having accused him of so foul an action, and stating that what I had done was at the instigation of some enemies of his, having myself no manner of cause of complaint against him.

These were the honourable means they found to accommodate the parties. I had no sooner signed this declaration against my honour and my conscience than I was discharged; and, in truth, what would not I have written? what would not a man say or do to get out of prison? Those who know what it is to live in such a place will excuse me for having proclaimed a thief to be an honest man for the sake of my liberty. I repaired immediately to my inn,

where I found Sayavedra in a most disconsolate state of mind, much doubting whether the application of my solicitor, and the scandalous reports in the town concerning my imprisonment, would prevail so far as to extricate me from confinement. This dear confidant was overjoyed to see me, whom he did not in the least expect. The gentlemen who lodged at the inn were just going to sit down to dinner. As soon as they saw me enter, they all embraced me, and wished me joy of my enlargement, telling me how much they had been concerned at my misfortune. During dinner the whole discourse ran upon my judges, and Heaven knows they did not spare them. For my part, I spoke of them with a great deal of prudence, for fear of some new accident.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

GUZMAN, BEING OUT OF PRISON, PREPARES TO SET OFF TO MILAN, BUT AN OPPORTUNITY OFFERS OF GETTING MONEY, AND HE DELAYS HIS JOURNEY.

DINNER being over, I ordered Sayavedra to hire horses for Milan, whither I intended to proceed the next day; for, after what had happened to me at Bologna, that place had now become more unpleasant



so far as to extricate me from confinement. My dear confidant was overjoyed to see me, whom he did not in the least expect. The gentlemen lodged at the inn were just going to sit down to dinner. As soon as they saw me enter, they embraced me, and wished me joy of my enlargement, telling me how much they had been concerned at my misfortune. During dinner the whole discourse ran upon my judges, and Heaven knows they did not spare them. For my part, I spoke of them with a great deal of prudence, for fear of some accident.

CHAPTER XXXVIII,

*SCORRAT, BEING OUT OF PRISON, PREPARES TO
GO TO MILAN, BUT AN OPPORTUNITY OF
GETTING MONEY, AND HE DELAYS
HIS JOURNEY.*



H. de Leeuw



9. Tiene insight - L. no ha
tenido la experiencia

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and dangerous to me than Florence. Whilst my squire was gone to execute this commission, I called upon my lawyer again, and offered him my purse; but, still carrying on his generosity, he declined it, telling me that all he wished of me was to be persuaded that he regretted nothing so much as his inability to obtain me justice. I replied, that I felt as much obliged to him as if he had obtained for me a restitution of all I had lost; and we parted with the most sincere protestations of service and friendship.

Having returned to the inn, and finding myself at a loss how to employ my time, I amused myself by looking over three gentlemen who were at cards. I seated myself at the side of one of them, and observed his game; and, by a whim common enough to the human mind, felt myself insensibly more concerned in his behalf than for the two others. When he lost I felt sorry, and when he won I was as glad as if I was entitled to a share of his gains. Fortune was for a long time doubtful between the three players, though the money flew about among them in plenty. They had each at least thirty pistoles before them, and played for large stakes. The one whom I felt interested in seemed to know the least of the game, and was consequently soon the loser, when the company grew warm, and the bets began to run high. I longed mightily to advise; and though I knew that would not be fair, I could scarcely resist when I perceived that he had lost almost all his money. At length he lost the last farthing; after which he rose and left the room, telling the company he would

procure more money, and should expect his revenge after supper. By what I afterwards learnt, this young man had just arrived at Bologna, to take his degrees in the civil law, for which purpose his friends had supplied him with sixty pistoles, which he had thus quickly got rid of, without having obtained even his doctor's cap. One of the two gentlemen who had so completely emptied his pockets was one of his fellow-students, a nobleman of Bologna, and the other had the appearance of a French officer. This latter was somewhat older than his comrades, and the most skilful of the three. The French are no fools at gaming, though they sometimes meet with persons of other nations who trim them in their turns.

I withdrew to my own room, so much the more sorry that my doctor *in fieri* had lost, as I feared I had brought him ill-luck. Prepossessed with this ridiculous idea, I reproached myself in having stood by him all the game, and considered myself as the cause of his ruin. Then recollecting myself, and blushing at my foolish sensibility, what an egregious fool I am, thought I, thus to torment myself about what does not in the least concern me. Have I not troubles enough of my own, but I must grieve for other people's losses? While my mind was occupied with these thoughts, I heard the young man enter his own room, which was only divided from mine by a thin partition. He had just returned from the town without having been able to get any more money, and, more enraged against those who had

refused to lend him any than those who had stripped him of his last farthing, "What misery!" cried he; "is it possible that in a town like Bologna, an honest man cannot find means of borrowing thirty pistoles; sure the inhabitants must be Turks instead of Christians—indeed, I can scarcely believe but the Turks would have humanity enough to relieve me in such an emergency!"

Thus saying, he sighed most bitterly and stalked up and down the room for a considerable time; then relapsing into his passion, he roared like a bull, struck the table with his fist, and bestowed all the curses he could think of on the inhabitants of Bologna. At length, tired of raving and swearing, he threw himself upon the bed, continuing his lamentations in a more plaintive tone.

In vain did I endeavour to harden my heart, for I felt, in spite of myself, much afflicted at his misfortune. At this moment my confidant entered my chamber, and told me that, after considerable difficulty, he had been so fortunate as to find return horses to Milan.

"Speak low, my friend," said I, in a whisper. "My neighbour is so distressed at the loss of his money, that he has excited my pity, and I will confess to you that I have some idea of avenging his cause."

"How can you effect that?" said Sayavedra.

"By taking his place this evening, and playing in his stead, to be sure," answered I. "It must be neck or nothing—full pockets or empty all of a sudden. At all events, it is very certain that the

small sum we have now left will not carry us far. Thirty pistoles, which is the utmost we have, will go such a little way with travellers who do not condescend to walk, and who live like noblemen at inns, that it appears to me we cannot hesitate a moment. What think you, Sayavedra, what do you advise? Tell me not that I am going to occupy the place of one whose ill-luck may be contagious, as I am no superstitious player, and besides, shall be quite a match for my opponents."

My confidant replied, "that he always approved of whatever I thought proper to do; but that since I condescended to consult him, he would recommend me not to trust too much to chance, but to take measures to ensure good fortune."

"What measures?" said I, pretending to be quite a novice in the business.

"Are you ignorant then," said he, "that when people play for the sake of winning, it is common to make use of every means without ceremony to strip our neighbour's pockets? Honest folks nowadays do this without the slightest scruple of conscience. Be assured, that what I tell you is true, and be not a greater fool than others; I will assist you as far as the little knowledge I have in these matters will avail."

I was overjoyed at this proposal of Sayavedra's, and more particularly as he volunteered his services on this occasion; for up to this moment I had kept up at least the *appearance* of honesty with him, which is absolutely necessary if one expects to be faithfully served.

I now, however, told him that, as he well knew, I could have no other object than that of gain, and that if he was acquainted with an infallible mode of always playing with success, I should be glad to learn it of him; and that if even there were a little spice of knavery in it, it were surely pardonable in the present deplorable condition of my finances. He was charmed in his turn at my apparent readiness to submit to his instructions.

“I need only give you one lesson,” said he, “to enable you to get all the money at the table. I shall watch my opportunities to take a turn round the room, either to snuff the candles, or to bring you a glass of wine; meantime I shall see what cards your adversaries hold, which I can easily communicate to you by signs agreed upon between us.”

Sayavedra having thus instructed me, I agreed with him that I should be a fool indeed were I to lose with such an assistant. We agreed then upon our signs, and my preceptor did not fail to perceive that he had a very apt scholar in me.

About supper time I repaired to the parlour, where the two fortunate players were already in waiting. My neighbour, the young lawyer, soon arrived, and we all sat down to table. During the whole of the repast, this young gentleman, melancholy as he was at heart, used every effort to appear gay, talked a great deal, drank the healths of all present, and affected the utmost good humour. After supper his two opponents proposed cards, and as they were taking their seats, the young lawyer said :

"Gentlemen, I trust you will not object to play with me for thirty pistoles on my honour, having to-morrow a very considerable sum to receive."

At these words the Frenchman pulled a long face, and said nothing; and his companion declared at once, that he played with no one upon credit; that he had taken an oath to that effect, having always remarked that it brought him ill-luck.

"Very well, gentlemen," replied the other, "have but a little patience, and I will run to a merchant whom I was not so fortunate as to find at home in the morning, who will in a moment lend me whatever I want."

The two gentlemen answered "that he would be sure to find them in the parlour if he returned before midnight."

It was now my turn to speak. Addressing myself therefore to the two gentlemen who remained, I suggested, that if agreeable to them I should not object to make a third hand until the return of their comrade; that I would instantly give up my place to him should he rejoin the party, as, having determined to leave that place very early the next morning, I could not have the pleasure of their company long. The gentlemen, who judged from my physiognomy that I could have but little knowledge of the game, answered, with joy, that they should esteem it an honour. While they were preparing the cards, I called to Sayavedra to bring me some money. He threw our whole stock, which was about thirty pistoles, on the table with a careless air,

telling me he would go upstairs and get more if I thought I should require it. I replied that it was quite sufficient, for that I should think of retiring to bed when that was lost.

We were soon in a proper train. Sayavedra seated himself in a chair near the fireplace, and remained there by my orders to be in readiness to wait upon us. Being rather lucky in the onset, I soon got a hundred crowns in my pocket, without the least chicanery. This looks well, thought I, and if unfortunately for me he should return with his purse replenished, I shall not have occupied his seat for nothing. My good luck seemed to vex my adversaries exceedingly, who, fearing lest I should retire to bed, as I continually kept threatening to do, in order to irritate them the more, proposed to double the stakes. I made no objection, and a moment after, seeing that now was the time, I called to Sayavedra :

“Wake up, you lazy dog,” said I, “have you nothing to do but to sleep there? give me a glass of wine directly.”

He rose up with the most innocent air possible, pretended to be but half awake, and in pouring out a glass of wine, enabled me by his signals to pocket fifteen of my opponents' pistoles in a twinkling. My fund was now considerably increased; but to keep up the plan we had agreed upon, I allowed them to win some of this back again, though I might easily have added to my gains.

To say the truth, with my own knowledge of the

tricks of the game I might easily have emptied the purses of these gentlemen, who were by no means good players. It must, however, be confessed that I won their money much quicker with Sayavedra's assistance, especially when it was not my turn to shuffle the cards. At last I found myself master of all the money that had been spread upon the table, and said :

"Gentlemen, it is very late; you know that I have a right to retire; nevertheless, that you may not think that I wish to carry off your money, and take an undue advantage, let us play again to-morrow, and I will not set off as I intended, though I have already hired horses for that purpose."

Nothing being more capable of consoling losers than the hope of having their revenge, they pressed me no longer to continue the game that night, and we accordingly separated, each taking the way to his own room—they fearing that I should break my word, and I fully determined to keep it.

Joy of having won so much money, and the agitation of my spirits caused by the game, prevented me for a long time from tasting the sweets of sleep. Happily, however, nothing but agreeable images occupied my thoughts. It was very different with my unfortunate neighbour, who had returned from the city without having been able to raise any money, and, not daring to show his face in the parlour, had sneaked to bed full of rage and shame. I heard him sigh most bitterly, and tossing himself in bed from one side to the other. I was delighted in having

avenged his cause to my own profit; but, what is strange, felt no longer any compassion for him, as though he was less to be pitied because I had got his money. So true it is that we commiserate the misfortunes which we do not cause, but are insensible to those which are advantageous to ourselves.

The next morning my two gaming friends were particularly anxious to ascertain of the servants whether I was gone or not, and were much pleased when they learnt that I had really postponed my departure. They were afraid that I should escape them, while on the other hand nothing was less in my thoughts than to leave them without making myself master of the remainder of their money; but, to increase their anxiety, I did not make my appearance in the parlour until dinner time. Without appearing to take any notice of them, I soon perceived, even during our meal, how eager they were to return to the attack with me; meantime I affected a coldness and indolence, the better to persuade them that it was purely out of complacency that I was willing to give them their revenge.

No sooner was dinner over than cards were brought in, and my two champions, to show that they were well provided for the contest, drew out a long purse each, well stored with good pistoles and Spanish doubloons, which they threw on the table, saying:

“Behold, signor cavalier, what you will no doubt carry off to-morrow with you.”

Little did they think how truly they said this! We

took our places then, and the game commenced. It was my intention to lose at this point, so that I had no occasion for Sayavedra. It being by no means my intention that they should win much of me, I manœuvred it so well that I lost but about forty crowns after dinner, when the Frenchman proposed to play higher.

"No," said I, "we have played now for a long time; let us therefore rest a little, and we shall then be better able to devote a part of the night to this religious pastime."

The hope they entertained of treating me still worse, or rather of ruining me, enabled them to keep up their patience until after supper. On my side my intentions towards them were not a whit more charitable, which I soon made appear when we set to again. Fortune was at first rather adverse, but with my own skill and the assistance of my faithful squire, I soon obliged her to declare herself for me, and my gentlemen soon lost all their doubloons, which were transferred from their purses into mine. After which, leaving the game to go to their chambers, they told me that if I should be in the humour to give them another game the next day, they should not be afraid of me. I answered that I should like nothing better, and that they would find me always ready to accommodate them.

I then retired to my own chamber with my confidant, who immediately prepared to undress me, but I prevented him.

"It is no time now to enjoy rest," said I; "it is too

late to enjoy the comfort of reposing between two sheets at this inn. I intend to depart hence without beat of drum as soon as possible."

Sayavedra reminded me that I had first promised the gentlemen to play another game with them.

"I have not forgotten," replied I, "that I made such a promise, but I am not such a fool as to think of keeping it. Imagine to yourself the dangers I should expose myself to, by remaining any longer in this city. If it was in the power of the thieves to get me imprisoned, after having themselves robbed me, what may I not reasonably fear from honest folks who have real cause to accuse me of roguery? We have already won above six hundred crowns. Let us be content, therefore, and betake ourselves to a place of safety as soon as possible. Have you not hired horses?"

"Undoubtedly," answered he, "I have paid their master for their day's work, and they will be in waiting for us by break of day."

"So much the better," replied I, "for I shall not consider my purse in safety till I am at least ten good leagues from this place."

My confidant left me to enjoy a few minutes' rest, well pleased to hear that we were possessed of so considerable a booty, and flattering himself with the sweet hope of having some part of it for his share. He was not, however, without some anxiety on this point when he recalled to mind the history of my trunks, which he feared was too recent a transaction to have so soon escaped my memory.

As soon as he heard the least noise in the house, and imagined the servants were stirring, he returned to my chamber, where he found me quite ready for starting. In fact, I had not so much as reclined upon the bed the whole night, but was most agreeably occupied in counting my treasure, putting the gold on one side, and the silver on the other, and in packing up as expeditiously as possible our little property. We soon settled with the landlord, and gained the spot where our horses were in waiting. The city gates were scarcely opened before we found ourselves in the country. Never was so lovely a morning. At any other time I should have admired its charms, but in the agitated state of my spirits the beauty of the day was very indifferent to me. My object was to get over the ground, imagining every moment that the hounds of justice would be up with me, and reconduct me to the prisons of Bologna, there to compel me to restore the money I had so dexterously possessed myself of. I turned round every moment to see if any one was following us, and when I perceived a gentleman behind trotting faster than we were, my heart beat, my colour changed, and I did not recover myself until he fairly passed us on the road. So true is it, that every criminal carries about with him his own punishment.

I became by degrees more tranquil, and when we had travelled about four leagues, felt but little fear remaining. Breaking the silence which both my companion and I had kept till that moment :

“Are you not tired, Sayavedra,” said I, “of thus

travelling like two Carthusian friars? For my part, I feel quite absorbed in idle meditation. Let us talk. Tell me some story which may enliven us."

"Signor Don Guzman," said he, "you will, I am sure, be ready to allow that it much better becomes him who has plenty of money in his pocket to tell merry stories, than him who has not a sous wherewith to bless himself."

"I understand you, my friend," answered I, smiling; "but I assure you, that at dinner time we will come to a reckoning, and I trust you will not have cause to be dissatisfied."

"How you catch at every joke I pass," replied he, laughing aloud; "I protest that I had not such a thought, knowing full well that in serving you I have done but my duty, for which I am amply paid in the pleasure of having assisted you in fleecing those two gulls of their doubloons."

The disinterestedness which Sayavedra assumed, whether real or false, pleased me exceedingly; and it being by no means my intention to balk him of the remuneration due to him for his signs, I made him a present of twenty pistoles, as soon as we arrived at a little inn where we stopped to dine.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

*SAYAVEDRA, TO AMUSE GUZMAN ON THE ROAD,
RELATES TO HIM THE HISTORY OF HIS LIFE.*

WE remounted our horses, after having made a much better meal than we expected on entering so inconsiderable an inn; and, far from preserving the silence we had kept up all the morning, we conversed on various subjects. Amongst the rest I chanced to ask Sayavedra how he first became an adventurer. He answered, that the only way to satisfy my curiosity was to relate to me the history of his life. I assured him, that it would afford me great pleasure to hear his adventures, and, without any more ceremony, he began in these terms:

“Though I told you at Rome that I was born at Seville, it was not the truth. Valencia was in reality my native place, where perhaps may be found more rogues than in any other city in Spain, because it is a place which abounds with good things, and rich countries seldom produce honest men. My father was certainly only a commoner, but of that sort of citizens who pretend to hold up their heads with the nobility. Having lost his wife, whom he loved tenderly, he took it so much to heart, that he did not long survive her. He left two sons; and these two sons, of whom I was the younger, sold all his property, which was but trifling, and divided its produce

equally. After which my brother asked me what plans I had in my head. I confessed to him candidly, that my ruling passion was to travel. And mine also, said he. I have always taken pleasure in any accounts of foreign countries, and long extremely to see how people are who were not born in Spain. Both led on thus by the force of our stars, or rather, perhaps, by our own evil propensities, we set off together one fine morning from Valencia, each with a small parcel under his arm.

“We had not travelled above a league, when my brother said to me: ‘A thought has just entered my head. We are about to abandon ourselves to fortune, and as we cannot know in what manner she may treat us, we may hereafter find ourselves in situations where our greatest pain may be that we are known, and that our real names may be covered with infamy. To prevent this misfortune, let us change them.’ I approved of this idea, and we soon found ourselves fresh names. My brother took that of Mateo Lujan, and as I recollected that the most illustrious in Seville was that of Sayavedra, I assumed that name, which I have passed by ever since. Being decked out with these fine titles then,” continued he, “we began to think of the route we should take. I had declared my wish to pass into Italy, and my brother testified the same desire; but, changing his mind all of a sudden, he took it into his head to go to France. The dispute ran so high between us on the subject, that on arriving at cross roads, one of which led to Saragossa and the other to Barcelona, my brother

took the former, and I the latter, wishing each other every sort of happiness and prosperity. After this fraternal separation I repaired to Barcelona, intending, as well as a great many other persons who were waiting there with the same design, to take my passage by the galleys. They did not arrive, however, until above a month after; during which time I dressed handsomely, sought the best company, and young Signor Sayavedra was extremely well received everywhere. He gamed, gave entertainments, and did not fail to devote some portion of his time to love. In short, I made so merry during this interval, that when the galleys arrived, and my debts were paid, I embarked with six pistoles only in my pocket. We arrived safely at Genoa, where, finding a vessel on the point of sailing for Naples, I would not lose so good an opportunity, and the wind being extremely favourable, we made but a short voyage of it.

“If, on the one hand, I was now rejoiced to find myself in the city, which of all others I had wished to be in, how mortified was I, on the other, when I considered the condition of my purse, which was as empty as any hermit’s. Doubtless, thought I, Naples is a place where pleasures abound; but they are as dear here as elsewhere, and a man without money in his pocket will cut but a very ridiculous figure. I knew well that I must be industrious, and accordingly addressed myself to certain other gentlemen who lived by their wits. I apprised them of my desire and necessity to become one of their brethren. My roguish air prepossessed them instantly in my favour,

and after a short examination which I was obliged to undergo, I was pronounced to be fully qualified to be one of their company. I was no sooner enrolled, than they made me commence my operations in their way of business. By their own confession I acquitted myself as if the principles were innate with me; and accordingly I was soon employed in all sorts of thieving, that is to say, in cutting purses, picking locks, stealing cloaks in the darkness of the night; in short, a hundred such-like exercises, which are but A, B, C, to old practitioners in the science, but have a wonderful tendency to raise an honest man step by step to the gallows.

“But, without vanity, my abilities were of too superior a kind to confine myself to these little tricks, and I certainly performed two or three which were considered masterpieces. I must relate one of them to you. The Lord High Constable’s house was the rendezvous of every person of quality, who assembled there of an evening to play. I had already been once in this house while the game had been going on, and had observed everything with a curious eye. I had particularly noticed that on each of the tables there stood two handsome silver candlesticks with wax lights, and I determined to think of some expedient by which I could possess myself of a pair of them. With this view I bought a pair of pewter ones of about the same height, with two wax candles in them. I managed to get these very conveniently into my pocket, and one evening having dressed myself so that I might pass for a boy belonging to one

of the gentlemen of the party, I stole to the High Constable's house, and posted myself at the door of a small room where two young gentlemen only were at play. I perceived with pleasure that all the pages of the house were engaged in the other rooms, which appeared to be full of company. My two players continued engaged together for a long time, and, their candles being almost burnt out, seemed to require fresh ones. I seized this favourable moment, and drawing from my pocket my pewter candlesticks, I lighted my wax candles by the lamp on the staircase, and entered the room in which the two gentlemen were with a most respectful bow, and with my two candlesticks in my hand. These I placed boldly on the table in the place of the two silver ones, which I carried off under my cloak after having extinguished them. I then ran as fast as my legs would carry me to our captain, who was the receiver-general of our stolen goods, a very grave personage, and who passed in the city as a very honest man. He acted both as a protector and a lawyer towards us when we happened to be caught in a trap, and out of gratitude we gave him a fifth part of the produce of all the thefts we committed.

"Another time I performed a still more desperate trick. I happened to be passing one morning before a house which appeared to be the residence of some man of opulence, and which turned out afterwards to be really the case. The door being open I walked in. I entered two or three rooms on the same floor, without meeting any one, and I perceived, on the

table of the last, a complete new lady's dress of the finest velvet. I deposited this without ceremony under my cloak, and in two jumps was in the hall again; but unfortunately I found the master of the house at the door, who seeing me come out with a large parcel under my arm, stopped me short, and inquired in a voice of thunder what I had got under my cloak. Most people in my situation would have been quite confounded; but I, on the contrary, without being in the least at a nonplus, answered him immediately, that it was his lady's velvet robe, which I was carrying home in order to set the collar to rights and alter one of the sleeves. 'So much the better,' replied he, 'but you must bring it back as soon as possible, for my wife will want it this afternoon, to visit a lady of quality of her acquaintance.' I assured him that I would not fail, and, thus saying, shot from him as swift as a roebuck.

"This adventure soon spread itself in the town; and even the next day I heard that the gentleman, after having spoken to me, immediately entered his house, where he heard his wife and two or three of the servants making as much noise as if they were in a tavern; that the mistress was crying out most vehemently, 'Where is my velvet robe? it was here not a minute ago; you shall pay me for it;' that the servants, having seen no one either enter or leave the house, protested that it must have been the devil who had carried it off; and that at last the husband quieted this uproar, by telling them what had really become of it. I was given to

understand also, that the officers of justice had been informed of it; that my person had been very accurately described to them, and they were actually everywhere in search for me, the gentleman whom I had robbed being himself a notary. During all this time, my booty was in safety at our protector's house, where the whole company laughed heartily at their fruitless exertions to find me. Nevertheless, this trick, which I played with as much good luck as dexterity, had consequences which do not occupy a very agreeable place in my memory. Thus it happened—

“Happening one day to be taking a stroll out of the city, near a pretty large rivulet, I observed some very fine linen on the banks, which a laundress had just washed and spread out upon the grass. Such opportunities as these always tempted me; and I could not resist my extreme desire of making myself master of some part of this linen, the more especially as I really was in want of some. I only waited, therefore, for the moment when I could make the attempt without being perceived, and that moment at length arriving, I performed the exploit with such rapidity, that to possess myself of some of the very best of the linen, and take the way back to the town, was done in the twinkling of an eye. Though the old washerwoman had not observed the action at the moment, it so happened that she just afterwards turned her head to look at her linen. Astonished to perceive a reduction of at least two-thirds, she looked quickly around her, and seeing nobody but me, she thought

rightly enough that I must be the thief, and accordingly, leaving the remainder of her linen to take its chance, she ran after me, crying out, 'Stop thief! Stop thief!' in a voice which made the country resound. In this embarrassment, what could I do? I let the parcel slip gently from under my cloak upon the ground, hoping that the laundress, satisfied with having her property, would pursue me no further; but, whether she thought that I had more about me, or was bent upon my ruin, she followed me up to the city gates, where the sentry stopped me, asking what was the matter. The washerwoman was soon up with us, and began immediately by cuffing me, saying that I had stolen the whole of her linen. I was then searched all over, and as my cloak and the under part of my arm were wet through, it was easy enough to guess that I had got rid of the bundle, in order to deny that I had robbed my accuser. Nothing more was necessary to entitle me to a lodging in one of the palaces of justice.

"I communicated my imprisonment to our lawyer, who came to me immediately. I told him the circumstances, and he repaired to a criminal judge. They had a long conversation together, which ended with the promise that I should be set at liberty that very day. He brought me the good news, and I prepared to leave the place. The order was already made out, the gaoler satisfied, and I had one foot out of prison, when, by the malice of the devil, my friend the notary, who had

been so actively in search for me, and who happened to have a little business there, presented himself before me. He stared me full in the face, and recognizing me immediately, he flew in a passion, gave me a violent blow with his fist, which made me reel back into the prison again, and told the gaoler to lock me in, for that I had robbed him, and he would certainly get me committed. Our lawyer, who was present, exerted all his flowers of rhetoric to appease him. He even went so far as to promise the value of the robe; but the cursed notary, preferring the pleasure of being revenged on me to that of recovering his property, was inexorable; the consequences of which were, that I was honoured with a hearty whipping, and banished the kingdom.

“After this disgrace, which I bore as patiently as I could, my captain, by way of consolation, offered me a letter of recommendation to a friend of his, the chief of a banditti who inhabited a retreat in the Roman mountains, which, not knowing what better I could do, I accepted of. The chief had no sooner read my letter than he gave me a most gracious reception. He introduced me to the cavaliers of his company, than whom I never saw more savage-looking animals. It is true, that having left at Naples comrades so perfectly civilized, it was impossible but these mountaineers must have appeared to me wild and unsociable. Nevertheless, as one must always follow the fashion, I by degrees became accustomed to them, notwithstanding the terrible life they led. We made some good hits, and I found

myself in a short time with a purse well stocked. No sooner was this the case than I determined on leaving these honest folks. With this view, I requested leave of our chief for two months, under pretence of having some business at Rome. This was readily granted me, on my taking oath that I would return at the expiration of that time. This oath I certainly submitted to, but fully determined to forget it as soon as I got to Rome.

“I had pictured to myself that in so fine a city I should find opportunities to exercise my talents at every step I took. When, however, I had been there long enough to study the genius of the inhabitants, they appeared to me to be so cunning themselves, that I stood no chance among them. I made a few hits, but of such a nature as would do me no credit to repeat. In the last of these I narrowly escaped detection. This caused me to leave Rome suddenly, whence I thought proper to make the tour of Italy, that I might know it well, and I spent all my money in this wandering life. At length, being at Bologna, chance made me acquainted with Alexander Benti-voglio, who received me into his little troop. This man seems born for his profession. His custom is to leave his native place from time to time, and travel through the different towns in search of dupes; and after he has made any good stroke, he returns to Bologna, where he is always sure to be safe, as though nothing had happened. I occasionally accompanied him in these trips, and I was at Rome on his business the day on which your lordship was

persecuted by the mob. I called upon you at the ambassador's—you had the imprudence to display all your property and expose all your affairs to me—I reported this to Captain Alexander, who immediately planned the trick we played you. This action," continued he, "is always present to my mind; and my extreme sorrow on this account will be constantly nourished by your excessive kindness to me."

Sayavedra here concluded his history. After which his various adventures formed the topic of our conversation on the road towards Milan, where we arrived both fresh and merry, and similarly well-disposed to possess ourselves of the property of others.

CHAPTER XL.

*OF THE DARING ENTERPRISE WHICH GUZMAN AND
SAYAVEDRA FORMED TOGETHER IN THE CITY OF
MILAN.*

WE passed the first three days in walking about the streets, examining the different articles with which the shops were decked out, without thinking as yet of turning our genius to advantage. Happy times for the citizens of Milan!

As we were strolling as usual one morning, a young man, tolerably well dressed, accosted Sayavedra who was behind me. I always walked first,

and did not perceive him until I had got about a hundred paces on. I then looked attentively at this young man who had stopped my confidant, and there was something mettlesome and cunning in his appearance which I did not like. Oh, oh! thought I, who can this chap be? what business can they have together? This is what I must know; but how can I possibly learn? Were I to call Sayavedra, and ask him the subject of this conversation, he would not fail to frame a lie in an instant, and I should not be a bit the wiser. All I can do, then, is to keep quiet, let them go on their own way, betray no suspicion of Sayavedra, but keep a sharp eye over him.

Their conversation lasted above a quarter of an hour, after which the young man took his leave of my confidant, who rejoined me with a thoughtful air, which by no means dissipated my suspicions. I was in hopes that he would have explained the rencontre to me; but he said not a word about it, still remaining in a reverie. I kept silence also until after dinner, when, finding myself alone with him, and being able no longer to contain myself—

“Mr. Sayavedra,” said I, smiling, “may I presume to ask who that young man might be with whom you had so serious a conversation this morning? I think I have seen him at Rome. Is not his name Mendocia?”

“No, sir,” replied he, “he is named Aguilera, and I assure you very appropriately so called; for he shows himself a true eagle whenever he has occasion to use his claws. He is a good companion, has a

tolerable share of wit, and is very clever in many respects. We have known each other for a long time, have travelled in company, and have suffered a great deal together. His head is at present full of a scheme which, if it succeeds, will make his fortune. He proposed to me to be a party to it, offering me half the profits. I told him that I would undertake nothing without first apprising you of it. I even went so far as to add that you were so extremely kind to me, that I felt assured you would not refuse us your advice in an affair of such consequence."

"No," said I, "undoubtedly I would not; on the contrary, my friend, I am well disposed to assist you both. Let me know what is the subject in debate."

"Sir," replied he, "Aguilera is to call here this afternoon, when you can speak to him yourself. He will disclose his whole project to you, and if there be any alteration required in his plan, you can adjust it to perfection."

He had no sooner said these words, than he was informed that a young man wished to speak with him. We had no doubt but this was Aguilera, for we knew no one else at Milan. Sayavedra ran to meet him; and after having prepared him for the conversation we should have together, he introduced him to me. We saluted each other with much politeness. Aguilera was a well-looking young man, and appeared to me to possess good sense. He confirmed everything my confidant had told me, and related to me in an agreeable manner several of their exploits to-

gether. He then informed me, that having come to Milan in the hope of making some good hit, he had found means to introduce himself to the service of a rich banker, with whom he had lived about six months as his clerk; that he had by his assiduity and fidelity entirely gained the confidence of his patron, waiting patiently until he found a good opportunity of robbing him; that such a one now presented itself; but that he had occasion for a second to avail himself of it, and that in meeting Sayavedra he looked upon him as a man sent from heaven for that express purpose, being well acquainted with his abilities that way. I asked him "if there would be any difficulty in the execution of his design?"

"Not a great deal," replied he, "but you shall judge for yourself. The banker has within these few days deposited in his strong box a large chamois leather purse, containing one thousand good pistoles. It is my intention to take possession of these on Sunday morning, while my patron is at mass, and to join Sayavedra at a certain place, where he shall have two horses in waiting. We shall be off in an instant, and ride our hacks so vigorously that we shall be far enough from the city before the banker can discover the copious bleeding his strong box shall have sustained."

After having listened to Aguilera very attentively, I told him that his undertaking was of a much more delicate nature than he himself seemed to imagine; that, being known in the town as the confidential

clerk of the banker, he might meet some person on the road, who, surprised to see him travelling on a post-horse, would naturally suspect him of some roguery, and immediately communicate his suspicions to his master; that the banker on his return from mass would perhaps immediately discover that he had been robbed; that this report would soon spread itself about the town, and that it would soon be ascertained that Aguilera had set off with post-horses; the consequence of which would be, that his patron would have him pursued by certain persons well mounted, whom it might be rather difficult to escape. I urged many other objections, which convinced him that his plan was but ill-conceived. He confessed this, but told me at the same time, that he should nevertheless execute it, as he saw no better way. "I have to do," continued he, "with a man who never leaves his house except on Sundays to hear mass, and then immediately on his return shuts himself up as before in the room in which he keeps his papers and money."

"It matters nothing," replied I, "be he never so vigilant, 'twill be easy enough to get this same chamois leather purse into our hands without exposing yourself to the danger you are willing so rashly to incur. In good faith, gentlemen, if you know no better than this, you are as yet but apprentices to your trade. I will show you a genius superior to that of many besides you. I will take upon myself, if it so please you, the charge of conducting this enterprise, and without implicating you in any mis-

fortune that may happen to me in consequence; even though fortune be adverse to me, I will answer for the thousand pistoles, provided they remain in the strong box eight days longer."

Sayavedra and his friend laughed heartily at this speech, at which they were almost as much delighted as if the pistoles were already in their hands. They thanked me for the offer, and readily left the conducting of this affair to me; well persuaded, particularly Sayavedra, that I should not talk in this strain without being well assured of the event.

"Give yourselves no further trouble about it, then, gentlemen," added I; "you shall see that one who has been a page five or six years is somewhat wiser than a Roman bandit."

This hit at Sayavedra redoubled their mirth, and we were all very merry together. I then proceeded to question this confidential clerk of the banker's more particularly.

"By what means," said I, "did you intend to get the purse out of the strong box?—you have not the key of it."

"Certainly not," replied he, "for my patron will trust it to nobody. He occasionally gives it to me when I happen to be with him in his private room, and some person happens to come in, when he is himself engaged, for the payment of a bill. He throws me the key to take out a bag of which he tells me the number, and while I am counting the money, he keeps one eye on what he is writing and the other on me."

"This being the case," continued I, "it would be very difficult to take an impression of the key."

"Much less so, perhaps, than you imagine," answered Aguilera. "I have, God be praised, a pretty dexterous hand, and will undertake to bring you the impression of it; and also, if you think proper, that of the press in which the banker locks up his account-books and his daily cash."

At these words, which delighted me, I told him that if he could procure both the impressions we should be much more sure of success.

I did not forget to ascertain the situation of the room, the manner in which the bags were tied up, their marks—in fact, every particular that I considered necessary, of which I wrote down a circumstantial account. I then sent Aguilera home to his master, telling him that I would give him timely notice of the part he would have to play. After his departure, I told my confidant that I had put his friend to a difficult trial, and that I doubted much whether he would procure the impressions of the keys. But Sayavedra, who had a better opinion of his talents, thought otherwise, and he was certainly right. Within two days after, Aguilera kept his word, and informed me, also, where I might find a locksmith who would make me two false keys, provided I paid him handsomely. I have but one more question to ask you, said I—"At what hour is your master to be seen? for bankers are generally particular." Aguilera answered, "that the best time was between ten o'clock and noon."

"Good," said I, "return home then, and remember well what I now tell you: I shall not fail to be at the banker's house by ten o'clock to-morrow morning; arrange it so that you be with him at that time, and be sure you lose not a word of my conversation with him, in order that you may be brought forward as a witness, if necessary."

Everything being so far arranged, I carried the impressions to the honest locksmith I had been recommended to, and whom I found in reality the man for my business. He promised to make me two keys immediately for two pistoles, one of which I paid him in advance. On my return to my inn, I espied in a shop window a very neat sort of jewel-box, which after having carefully examined I bought. Sayavedra, who accompanied me, appeared somewhat surprised at this purchase. I could not resist laughing at his astonishment.

"Friend," said I, "be assured that this little casket will not be without its use."

"I do not doubt it," answered he, smiling; "you have not made a fool's bargain. You doubtless know the use you intend to put it to, and I leave that as well as everything else to your superior judgment."

I went the next morning at ten precisely to the banker's counting-house. Aguilera was there, and two or three gentlemen on business. I bowed to the master on entering the room, and addressing him in a loud voice, told him that I was come to Milan with the intention of making some purchases pre-

viously to my marriage; that I had brought a considerable sum of money which I should be glad to place in safety; and that instead of leaving it at my inn, where there were all sorts of people, I had thought it much better to trust it to a man like him, whose probity I had heard much commended. I added, that I had a short voyage to take to Venice, which would oblige me to have a credit from his house. The banker, greedy of gain, made me a thousand offers of service, accompanied by the most profound bows, and asked me the amount of the sum I wished to deposit in his hands. I answered, about twelve thousand franks of gold, and a small bag of silver specie, which I would send him in about an hour. He replied that my time was his; then reaching down his day-book from the press, he inquired my name, which I gave him as Don Juan Osorio. This he immediately wrote down, with the date of the day and month, the better to ensure my keeping my word.

After this, having no further business with him at that time, I took my leave after a thousand mutual compliments, entreating him not to leave his house until my return. I reached home well satisfied with the happy commencement of my scheme. Sayavedra, who was waiting for me with the more impatience as he was more interested in the business than I was, was not a little astonished when I informed him what I had just done.

"But, sir," said he, "pray where do you intend to get these twelve thousand franks which you have

promised to carry to the banker's? I am at a loss to know this."

"That need not give you the least uneasiness," answered I, "he has them already. I know well enough that this is Hebrew to you, but I have my reasons. Press me no more on this point at present, but tell me whether your friend Aguilera reckons among his talents that of being able to forge writing."

"Forge!" cried he with transport, "he can counterfeit any one's hand; it is his forte. Would to heaven that I had only the money he has touched by such means! if he had not excelled in that art, he would still have been at Rome; but he was obliged to decamp thence somewhat abruptly, for fear of falling into the hands of a brute of a merchant, who, having discovered that he had forged his signature, was in pursuit of him."

"This being the case," replied I, "our enterprise must infallibly succeed."

The reliance that Sayavedra placed in my skill, prevented his doubting the success I assured him of, though he knew nothing of my plans. All that vexed him was, that I had allotted no part in the performance to him, of which he complained to me, asking if he was to be dumb in the comedy.

"Never fear," said I, "I have reserved a character for you, which you will perform to admiration."

At the same time I ordered him to take under his arm the casket I had purchased and filled with lumps of lead. In addition to this I loaded him

with a bag of money, bound round with red ribbon, and stained with ink in the middle, because, as well as I could remember, there was one exactly similar to it in the strong box. We left our chamber together, as if with the intention of carrying all this to the banker's. Having got into the street, I said to my confidant: "Return for one moment into the kitchen, under pretence of asking our landlord what hour we shall dine, and what he intends for our dinner. In short, take care that his wife and he cannot fail to observe the casket with curiosity and attention. It is very essential to us that they should both take particular notice of it before you rejoin me."

No man in the world could be better adapted than Sayavedra to acquit himself well on such a commission. He went into the kitchen, where, after having asked the landlord the question I had desired him, he displayed without ceremony the casket and bag of money. The landlord and landlady immediately fixed their eyes on them; the casket, especially, was so much admired by the wife, that she could not resist requesting to be allowed to examine it more closely. Her husband did the same, and exclaimed—

"Good God, how heavy it is!"

"It may well be so," said Sayavedra, "since it is full of gold coin, to the amount of twelve thousand francs, which we are now going to deposit in a banker's hands."

"At a banker's!" cried the landlord abruptly,

"though they contained above a hundred thousand francs, both that casket and bag would be as much in safety at my house as at the richest banker's in the town."

The landlady, as ticklish as her husband on points of honour, added—

"Yes, we have occasionally deposits of value left with us; and, thank God and the Virgin Mary, we have always taken good care of them."

"I doubt it not in the least," replied Sayavedra. "Were you not considered honest people, my master would never have come to lodge with you with so much money. Think not then that he has a bad opinion of your house; but, the fact is, that he is on the point of setting out for Venice, and having occasion for a letter of credit to that city, we are in fairness bound to leave these twelve thousand francs with the banker who will supply him with one."

"That alters the case," replied the host, appeased; "I have nothing more to say to it. What is the banker's name?"

"Plati," replied my confidant.

"Plague on him," continued the landlord, "he is as rich as Cræsus, but a very Jew. He will make you pay handsomely for your confidence, I can tell you. If you had only said one word to me, I could have recommended you to a much more reasonable house."

"It is too late now," said Sayavedra; "my master has already agreed with this banker. But think not,"

continued he, "that I can gossip much longer with you, for my master is waiting for me. I merely came into the kitchen to ascertain whether we should have time to settle our business before dinner."

The landlord begged that we would not hurry ourselves, and hoped that we should always find him ready to accommodate us in any way while in his house.

My confidant having repeated this conversation to me, we took a walk together quite out of the town. We returned after some time to the inn, where Sayavedra, by my desire, entered without being observed, and replaced both the casket and bag in my chamber. The table was not yet laid, the landlord, out of respect to me, having kept back the dinner, which was served up immediately he was told of my arrival. Having dined, I retired into my chamber, and sent for the landlord, who immediately came up, begging to know in what he could serve me.

"I have a complaint to make against you," said I; "how could you think me capable of suspecting so honourable a man as you? To convince you of the injustice you do me, I entreat you to take care of this purse containing a hundred pistoles, until my departure for Venice."

So saying, I drew from my pocket a perfumed purse containing that sum exactly. He was so sensible of this mark of confidence, that he could scarcely restrain his joy.

In the evening the banker's clerk stole from his master to join us.

"Well, Aguilera," said I, "your patron was doubtless very much surprised at not having seen me again this morning."

"In truth he was," replied he; "after having waited above an hour expecting you, he began to fear that you would return no more. As he cannot be ignorant of his bad repute at Milan, he thinks that some person has been charitable enough to caution you against him, and I could perceive that he was extremely mortified."

"Did the three gentlemen who were with him when I called this morning, stay long after I was gone?" said I.

"No," answered Aguilera, "nor did any one else drop in during the whole of the morning."

I was much pleased at this circumstance, and assured my companions, that in three or four days, at latest, we should bring this piece to a finale. The banker's confidential gentleman, overjoyed with this prospect, wished me good-night; but before we parted, I desired that he would not call again at the inn, representing the consequences to him, and arranging between us that every day at a certain hour he should repair to a certain place, where Sayavedra should meet him, and bring instructions from me.

My false keys were brought home two days after this. Aguilera, who was soon informed of this, told his friend he should have an opportunity of making use of them on the following Sunday after dinner, while the banker was amusing himself, as was his

custom, at a game of chess with one of his neighbours. I then let Sayavedra completely into the secret, in order that he might the better give his friend his instructions; and on the Saturday evening I despatched him to the rendezvous, entrusting to his care the two false keys and the casket, in which I put ten quadruples, thirty Roman crowns, and some slips of manuscript, instead of the lead which it before contained. As for the bag of money, I begged leave to keep that at home, having besmeared it with ink, and tied it up with red ribbon, merely that it might be exhibited to our landlord and his wife in that state, that they might testify to having seen it; so I had only put the lead into the casket to make it heavy, and to make these good folks believe that it was full of gold.

As soon as my confidant saw Aguilera, he said to him, "Now, my friend, listen to me with the utmost attention, and be particular in remembering what I tell you. Take these keys, and to-morrow, when you open the strong box, take out the chamois leather purse which is in it, and empty it into this casket; but be sure you take thirty pistoles out of the thousand you will find there, and substitute these ten quadruples in their place. You will not fail also to put this manuscript in, which contains a specification of the sum, and declares that it is the property of Don Juan Osorio, which is the name my master has assumed in this affair. This other slip of paper," continued he, "you must thrust into the bag in which you say there are three hundred and thirty

crowns, and which is stained with ink, and tied up with a red ribbon. You will at the same time extract from this bag thirty of these crowns, and slip in these thirty Roman crowns in their stead. I have but one thing now to tell, and which is most important of all; that is, to open the press in which your patron keeps his account books, and write in his journal the words you will find on this third paper, taking good care to let it be under the name of Don Juan Osorio, which you will find there entered, and also to imitate with your utmost dexterity the handwriting of Signor Plati. Signor Don Guzman, my master," added he, "requires nothing more of you but what will be the easiest part of the performance, namely, that on Monday, at the wind-up of the scheme, you affect to be a most zealous servant, call him all the vile names you can think of, and even strike him to make the scene more natural."

Aguilera here interrupted his friend.

"Enough," said he; "I see plainly the whole of the project, and that the master you serve is indeed a thorough-bred thief. You may assure him that I shall do everything he has prescribed for me, and it shall not be my fault if his plans be defeated."

Sayavedra thereupon delivered up to him the casket with the three papers, the ten quadruples, and thirty Roman crowns, which Aguilera carried home and hid, until the time came to make use of them.

CHAPTER XLI.

WHAT WAS THE SUCCESS OF THIS STRATAGEM.

I DID not pass the Sunday without some uneasiness, fearing lest some untoward circumstance might defeat our enterprise; but my confidant having been to the usual place of rendezvous in the evening, returned full of joy to announce to me that everything had been executed as I desired, and that Aguilera was preparing himself to play his part well the next day. This news restored my spirits, and I waited patiently for the hour when I should appear before the banker.

No sooner had it arrived than I repaired to his house; he was alone in his counting-house. After saluting him very politely, I told him I had called to request that he would return me what I had brought him a few days before. He inquired with astonishment what I had brought him.

"Zounds!" said I; "why, the gold and silver specie which I deposited in your hands."

"What gold and silver?" answered he.

"Oh, oh!" replied I; "what, you affect to joke? Upon my soul, this is not bad."

"Much more of a joke," rejoined he, "that you should expect me to refund what has never been given to me."

"Let us have no more jesting, however," said I, "on matters of business, which, I assure you, is by no means to my taste."

"Surely," said he, "it must be you that jest. I recollect well enough that a few days since you called upon me, and promised that within an hour you would bring me twelve thousand francs; but you forfeited your word."

"Rather," answered I, "confess that you have lost your memory. I protest that I delivered that sum into your own hands, and will not quit this house until it be refunded in the very same coins in which I paid it to you."

"Go about your business," replied he, "or I shall grow impatient with your nonsense. I neither know anything of you, nor have I ever had anything that belongs to you. Go and get your money from those to whom you entrusted it."

As the banker and I began now every moment to assume a higher tone, all the passers-by stopped to listen to our conversation, very anxious to know the subject of our dispute. That they might not be long in suspense, I cried aloud—

"O traitor and infamous thief! may the justice of God and man unite to punish you! When I entrusted you with my money, you received me most obsequiously, but now I am come to reclaim it you affect not to know who I am, and with the most barefaced effrontery deny the deposit! Cause the money to be counted out to me on this table instantly, or I will tear your soul out!"

The banker on his side called me all the names I deserved, until from abusing each other we insensibly came to action, and he endeavoured to push me out of the room by his shoulders, but I repulsed him with such a blow as laid him sprawling on the floor. Aguilera then rushed upon me with a furious air, and gave me a few fisticuffs, which I returned in such sort, that several of the spectators entered to separate us. The confidential clerk, finding himself restrained from rejoining me, pretended to struggle with those who held him, like a madman; while on my side, with my eyes glittering and my mouth foaming with rage, I defied him to approach me.

The affray had already lasted an hour, when the Bargello, by chance, or perhaps from some one's having told him what was going on, made his appearance. The first thing he did was to ask the subject of our quarrel, and the struggle now was which of us should speak first. He desired us both to hold our tongues; then, having informed himself which of us was the complainant, he desired me to speak first, after which he would hear what my adversary had to say. At these words a profound silence succeeded, and every one present listened attentively.

"Six days since," said I, "I came into this counting-house, and requested this same Signor Plati to allow me to deposit in his hands a considerable sum of money which I had brought to Milan with me, and which I did not think sufficiently secure at the inn where I lodge. He

answered with much politeness that I had only to send him the money, and he would take care of it as long as I thought proper. I accordingly returned home immediately, and returned an hour after with my servant, who carried in a gilt casket a thousand pistoles in gold, and in a bag stained with ink and tied with a red ribbon, three hundred and thirty crowns, thirty of which were Roman. The banker counted and weighed the coin, which he put with their specification in the casket and bag again, and then locked them altogether in his strong box."

Up to this moment the banker, not having dared to interrupt me, although in the fury that possessed him he could with difficulty restrain, had contented himself by raising his hands and eyes towards heaven to witness my imposture; but his patience now entirely forsook him, and he could hold out no longer.

"You see before you," cried he, "one of the most barefaced liars on the face of the earth. Should there be found in my house a casket such as that he mentions, I shall be content to forfeit my life and everything I possess in the world."

"And if what I have told you be not true," cried I, in my turn, "I will consent that the banker enjoy my property in peace, and that my ears be cut off like a traitor and audacious thief who dares demand what does not belong to him. It is a very easy matter," continued I, "to discover the truth. Nothing remains but to open the strong box, where you will find my casket and bag, with the accounts which

will inform you that the money belongs to me. Give orders, Signor Bargello, give orders immediately, I beseech you, that this old rogue show you his account books, where you will see what he himself wrote the day he received the money."

"You are right," replied the Bargello, "and further conversation would be superfluous. Come, Signor Plati, if this gentleman gave you the specie, there will, of course, be an entry in your books."

"Undoubtedly," answered the banker, "but I have no fear of your finding it; and if there should be any mention made of twelve thousand francs which this stranger assures you he entrusted to me, I will confess that he tells the truth, and that I am the impostor."

At the same time he told his clerk to reach him down the large account book out of his press. Aguilera had no sooner handed this to him, than I cried out—

"No, no, thou knave! this is not the book that will bear witness against thee, it was a smaller but longer one."

Aguilera then said to his master—

"He must surely mean our journal."

"Let it be the journal, then," replied the banker; "bring forward all the books in the house."

Aguilera then produced the journal, and asked me if that was the one I meant. I replied that it was. The Bargello immediately began to look it over, and finding in it what our colleague had written by my order, he read the following words in a loud voice—

"This day, the 13th of February 1586, Don Juan Osorio remitted me nine hundred and sixty pistoles in gold coin, Spanish and Italian, and ten quadruples, which make together the sum of one thousand pistoles, and which will be found in my strong box in a gilt casket. Moreover, I received from the said Don Juan the same day a bag tied with red ribbon, in which are three hundred and thirty crowns, thirty of which are Roman."

The company had no sooner heard this entry read than they all began to murmur against Signor Plati, thus giving me a decided advantage over him. Fortunately also for me, the banker did not pass in the town for an over-scrupulous man, so that every one readily believed the possibility of his having played me the roguish trick of which I accused him. The Bargello made him read these words, and asked him if he had not written them. The citizen, confounded by so extraordinary a circumstance, answered in an agitation which almost deprived him of the power of speech, "that he had written the first words, but not the remainder."

"How so?" replied the officer of justice, "it appears to be all in the same handwriting."

"I cannot deny that," rejoined the banker, "but, nevertheless, it is not all my writing."

"It will avail you nothing to deny it in this manner," said the Bargello; "you must prove its falsity."

A fresh scene now contributed to convince the standers-by that I had not complained without

cause. A voice of thunder resounded through the house, and a man with his kitchen apron and a large carving knife at his side made his appearance. This was mine host, whom Sayavedra had been in search of, and who, hearing that the banker denied having received the money, was furiously exasperated against him.

"Why," cried he as he entered, "do they not hang this arch Jew? Why not fire his house, and burn him with all his race?" Then perceiving the officer of justice, "Can you allow," said he, in a respectful and more moderate tone, "that a cavalier should be robbed, ruined, and struck, with impunity, for having trusted his property to a thief. This good gentleman lodges at my house, and I most solemnly assure you, that I have seen and handled the casket, as well as the bag which he has unfortunately confided to this banker, who is already but too well known at Milan for what he really is."

Signor Plati, thunderstruck as he was, said what he could in his own defence; but his feeble voice, which was scarcely audible at two paces from him, stood no chance with that of my landlord, which could be distinctly heard from one end of the street to the other. The people, therefore, who generally give the palm in such cases to him who makes the most noise, no longer doubting the justice of my complaint, cried aloud, that the banker should be compelled instantly to refund. The Bargello, addressing himself to the accused, represented to him, "that it was in vain to resist in retaining money

which did not belong to him ; that he would be compelled to make restitution, and that it was his duty to search his house for the casket and bag. Give me," added he, "the key of your strong box ; let us begin by visiting that, as your accuser affirms it is there you have deposited them."

Plati, being apprehensive of pillage during this uproar, could not make up his mind to deliver the key ; upon which the general cry was to lead him to prison.

"We will do better than that," said the officer ; "if he obey not this instant, I will have the strong box forced open."

The unfortunate banker, seeing that all resistance was useless, drew from his pocket the key, and delivered it into the hands of the officer, who, after having chosen four citizens out of those present, to be witness of the intended ceremony, opened the strong box before them and Plati, who almost fainted away when the gilt casket and bag were drawn forth.

The Bargello then turning to this poor devil, "Friend," said he, "did you not say you would forfeit your life and property if this casket were found in your house ? what if we take you at your word ? Good heavens ! what a trustworthy banker."

Thus saying, he shut down the strong box, and held up the casket in one hand and the bag in the other. The company present no sooner saw them, than they began, especially mine host, to load the banker with curses and revilings. The officer, in order to sift the

thing to the bottom, determined to open the casket. He asked me if I had the key. I drew it from my pocket, and handed it to him. The first thing that presented itself to his view was the specification in these terms: "This casket contains nine hundred and sixty pistoles in gold, and ten quadruples; the whole making one thousand pistoles, and belonging to Don Juan Osorio." The quadruples were in a parcel by themselves. These he showed to the banker, and then proceeded to open the bag, in which were found the thirty Roman crowns and the others with a similar account.

The cries of the company redoubled at sight of the sums exactly as I had stated them, and every one pressed the Bargello to give me up the casket and bag; which the officer would immediately have acceded to, if I had not declared that I would not receive my money except at the hands of justice, since we were in a city where, thank God, upright judges were to be found. The banker, being once more called upon to say what he had to allege against such positive proof, answered, more dead than alive, and not knowing what to think of an adventure which appeared so natural, "that it was all magic to him, and that the devil must assuredly have had a hand in it."

"If you have no better argument than that to bring forward," said the officer to him, "you have every chance of losing your cause, and being punished severely to boot."

Thus saying, he left the casket and bag in the

custody of a rich merchant in the neighbourhood, and went to make his report to the judges, who cited Signor Plati and me to appear before them the next morning. The banker was himself so ill that he found it impossible to attend, and contented himself by sending his wife and clerk, with some of his friends. As for me, I appeared boldly, accompanied by Sayavedra, my landlord and landlady, all three of whom were interrogated alternately, and asserted a great deal, especially the two last, more than they had either seen or heard. The judges heard Aguilera and his mistress in their turns, who confessed that not having been in the counting-house the whole of the day on which I stated that I had brought the money, they could not conscientiously swear that I had not been there.

Upon all these depositions the magistrates condemned my adversary to restore my gold and silver, and pay all costs, prohibiting him from ever practising the profession of banker again in Milan. The Bargello, in execution of this sentence, conducted me to the merchant with whom he had left the casket and bag, and having restored them to me, I returned triumphantly to my inn. When I arrived there, I was not a little time occupied in receiving congratulations on my success. The landlord and his wife, among the rest, could not moderate their joy. To testify my gratitude I made them some trifling presents, and all their servants had reason to praise my generous disposition.

CHAPTER XLII.

WHAT SHARE OF THE BOOTY GUZMAN GIVES TO HIS ASSOCIATES, AND THE RESOLUTION HE TAKES OF LEAVING MILAN.

As soon as I was safely in possession of a sum of money so honestly acquired, I could have wished myself far enough from Milan ; but as too precipitate a departure might have raised suspicions against me, I resolved to defer it for a few days. Sayavedra was so overjoyed at our good fortune, that he scarcely knew whether he was awake or dreaming. Then, thinking of the stratagem I had invented, he extolled me above all the rogues in the world.

"I did not give you credit for such a genius," said he, "though I confess I had an excellent opinion of your abilities before ; but I see clearly now that I am a long way behind you."

"Friend Sayavedra," said I, "there is nothing very extraordinary in the scheme. What will be most worthy of praise is how to avoid the possibility of danger by flight ; for," added I, smiling, "than to walk into a gentleman's house, the door of which stands open, steal a velvet robe from thence, and afterwards to receive a hundred lashes for one's pains, nothing can be more easy."

We passed the remainder of the day at the inn, and, when night came on, went out together to meet Aguilera at the rendezvous. As soon as he saw us approach, he began to laugh most heartily, and we

followed his example. He then complimented me on my address, after which I proceeded to divide the booty. I drew from my pocket a purse containing three hundred pistoles, which I gave to him, telling him that I intended the same sum for Sayavedra, and that I should keep the remainder myself, it being but fair that he who had done the most work should be the best paid. My two associates assured me they were perfectly well satisfied. This business being ended, and having nothing else to detain us, we bade Aguilera adieu, and returned home, where I employed myself after supper in counting my money. How overjoyed was I at finding myself in possession of upwards of seven thousand francs, independent of those I had won at Bologna. I had never been so rich before, and I thought no longer of having been robbed at Sienna.

As I was walking out the next day, I chanced to espy in a shop window a gilt chain so well wrought that I mistook it for gold. I went in and asked its weight. The shopkeeper answered with a smile that all was not gold that glittered, but that if I wished to purchase this chain, I should have it cheap. Being tempted by this offer, I gave him what he asked, and carried it off with me. Sayavedra, who was with me, could not restrain his laughter at my fine bargain, and when we had left the shop, said to me—

“Signor Don Juan Osorio, if I mistake not, means to make this chain more expensive to some other person than it has been to him?”

“That is by no means impossible,” replied I, and

with that praiseworthy intention, I immediately carried it to a skilful goldsmith, who in a few days made me a chain of gold so exactly similar to mine, that it was difficult to distinguish the one from the other.

At length I left Milan, carrying with me these two articles of jewellery, as well as all the feathers I had plucked out of Signor Plati's wings. I gave out at the inn, previously to my departure, that I was going to Venice; but instead of following that route, I took that to Pavia. I stopped some time at this latter place, in order to make preparations for my second journey to Genoa, which I had resolved upon making if ever I found myself in a condition to appear before my relations without making them blush. After some consideration I determined to act the part of a Spanish abbot returning from Rome. To this effect I purchased some fine cloth, with which one of the most famous tailors in Pavia made me a cassock and long cloak. To these I added some black morocco shoes and silk stockings, and the rest of my dress to correspond with that of a prelate. I desired Sayavedra to provide himself with two large baggage trunks, and when all was ready, I set out in a litter conducted by a muleteer, with my squire on horseback, a new valet on foot, and another muleteer who led a mule laden with my goods. In this grand equipage was Genoa revisited by that same Guzman whom it had seen six or seven years before in a situation miserable enough.

CHAPTER XLIII.

*OF GUZMAN'S ARRIVAL AT GENOA, AND THE GRACIOUS
RECEPTION HE MET WITH FROM HIS RELATIONS
WHEN THEY LEARNT WHO HE WAS.*

WE went to lodge at the White Cross, which at that time was the best inn in the place. It was already night, but as my squire had gone before us to prepare the landlord to receive an abbot of the first rank, I found the house all in a bustle when I arrived. Some of the servants were at the doors with flambeaux, and after Sayavedra had assisted me in alighting from the litter, the master conducted me to the best apartment in the house, from which a gentleman much more worthy to occupy it had been turned out to make room for me.

The inn was at that time full of people of consequence, most of whom were not a little curious to know who I was, and my new valet, well instructed by Sayavedra, told all who questioned him that I was the Abbot Don Juan de Guzman, son of a noble Genoese who had married at Seville.

I did not quit my chamber the first day, thinking it better to affect the abbot of consequence fatigued with his journey from Rome, and to get everything in readiness to show myself at Genoa the next morning in the character of a prelate. While I was employed in decorating myself with this view, my faithful squire, who was assisting me, could not refrain from saying: "I fear my dear master grows suspicious of me, since he has not yet deigned to communicate the plan he has in contemplation."

"No, my friend," replied I, "thou hast always had my confidence. If during our stay at Pavia I procured this new dress without telling you my reasons, it was merely because it was not at that time necessary that you should know them. But I will now satisfy your curiosity; for, so far from wishing to conceal my project from you, I cannot execute it without your assistance.

"I have already told you at Milan that my father, a noble Genoese, married at Seville a lady of the house of Guzman, whence I took my name. I have even related to you the history of my life at large; but I believe I never once mentioned that adventure to you which has been the cause of my forming the enterprise I am about to discover to you. You must know that about seven years since I set out from Toledo in tolerable good plight to visit my relations here in Italy; but I took so little care of my money on the road, that I arrived at Genoa in a most miserable condition. This did not, however, deter me from presenting myself before several members of the family, and among others one of my worthy uncles, who received me so ill, or rather caused me to be treated so cruelly, that I swore to be revenged on him if fortune ever afforded me the opportunity. This oath I intend to keep now that it is in my power; but the only vengeance that I am desirous of taking on my relations is to rob them. With this view I have assumed the dress which so much surprises you. Besides that it inspires respect, it appears to me more calculated than any other to disguise my

features from those who saw me before—the alteration that time has made in them not being so great but that I should be in fear of being recognised. Let us prepare, then, my dear Sayavedra, to play off some of our best tricks on our family, to which I am incited not only by a just resentment but by interest also.”

My confidant made answer, that I had only to give my commands, and he would not fail to follow my instructions. We consulted together what was best to be done, and proceeded as follows.

The second morning after my arrival I dressed myself out in my cassock and long cloak, and when I looked in the glass I scarcely knew myself. Without any vanity I did not look amiss. If I had not possessed the talent which I did to imitate all sorts of persons, I had seen at Rome so many fine models of abbots of consequence, that I could not possibly have failed. I soon made myself master of some of their best airs. I learnt how to draw my chin down to my neck with good effect, to assume a grave and austere carriage; to hold up my cassock and cloak just high enough to exhibit one leg, which was not ill-made, with the silk stocking and handsome shoe; to carry my hat in a manner equally genteel and modest; to look at people with a peculiarly absent air, and to modulate properly the tones of my voice in speaking to them. I possessed this knowledge perfectly well in theory, and now was the time that I should show the city that I was as able to practise it. My major-domo, Sayavedra, followed with my lackey, both very appropriately

—master

equipped. I was stared at with the curiosity that a stranger generally excites, and many made most profound bows to me, or rather to my fine dress; for one is treated in the world according to the appearance one makes. Let even Cicero present himself ill-dressed, and he would pass for a college servant at the highest.

I continued walking for above an hour, acknowledging the respectful civilities I received like an abbot who was accustomed to them. After which I returned to the inn, where the landlord immediately informed me that dinner was ready, and asked if I had any objection to some persons of quality dining at the same table. I answered that it would afford me pleasure. Having descended into the dining-room, four gentlemen arrived immediately and saluted me with respect. I returned the compliment very politely, and, dinner being served up, I took the seat of honour, and then requested the gentlemen to seat themselves at table. The conversation was at first serious on my account. I remarked this, and enlivened it myself, and to let these gentlemen see that I was not the devil, though dressed in black, I related two or three jocular stories, which soon excited the rest to follow my example.

They were usually in the habit of amusing themselves at play after dinner, and sometimes also after supper. They played high, but very honourably. I passed an hour in looking over them, after which I retired. They would have been much pleased if I had taken a fancy to play with them, thinking me

a rich abbot rather than a skilful gamester, though they ought to have known that there are a good many keen hands even among the clergy. I did not choose to satisfy their desire so soon, whatever longing I had for it. On the contrary, I professed a repugnance for play, and it was not until we became more familiar together that I could be brought to join them, and then I pretended to yield to their pressing entreaties out of pure complacency. I played only a short time, and for very small stakes, without employing Sayavedra or exerting my own skill. Thus what I lost was a mere trifle, and I never pocketed what I won. Sometimes I left it to pay for the cards, and at others distributed it among the servants. This conduct acquired me the reputation of generosity, whence it happened that whatever person chanced to drop in after dinner to look at us playing, generally crowded round me in the hope of receiving some ducats.

One day, having won about forty pistoles, I took up five-and-twenty of them, and left the remainder for those who stood about me. Then turning towards a captain of a galley, who was among the interlopers, I said to him in a low voice, slipping the money which I held in my hand into his—

“You have been too long in Spain to be ignorant that a gentleman who has looked over the game and taken an interest in the fortune of any particular player, never refuses any little token of gratitude that may be offered him on that account.”

He appeared somewhat confused by this behaviour,

but there are times in this life, as is said, when one pistole is worth a thousand. My officer's pocket was just at this time so completely drained, that the pleasure of seeing this sudden shower of gold overcame his shame. In spite of his poverty, however, I doubt whether he was more sensible of the benefit than of the manner in which it was conferred. I completely gained his heart. This he made several attempts to assure me of, but I interrupted him by engaging him to talk of his own pursuits. I even requested him to do me the honour to dine and sup with me occasionally, for he did not usually dine at our inn, and in taking leave of him I requested his friendship.

This captain was a man of merit, of good understanding, and agreeable person, and as he was known to be a very honest man, he was received in the best companies, where he made as good an appearance as his limited income as a captain of a galley would permit. He was fond of gaming, and, though extremely unlucky at it, he could never restrain himself while a crown remained in his pocket. In addition to this he was much addicted to women, which alone would have been sufficient to have ruined him had he been ever so rich. He called himself Favello, a name which a lady whom he had formerly loved had bestowed on him, and which he had ever since gone by, in remembrance of her. He told me the history of his life a few days after, which I could not hear without sighing, so forcibly did it recall to my mind my amour at Florence. The good qualities of this captain, however, were not the only cause of all my

politeness to him ; for I knew that the galleys would soon sail for Barcelona, and intending as I did to profit by this opportunity of returning to Spain, after having robbed my honest relations, the friendship of Captain Favello was likely to be too useful to me to neglect to acquire it.

No sooner was I up the next morning, than he called to tender his services, and to invite me to take a sail with him on the water, which I gladly accepted. I was conducted after dinner to his galley, where I was received with all the honours that the Pope or the Doge of Genoa could have expected. We left the harbour to admire the fine pleasure-houses along the sea-shore, which form a most charming spectacle. Our officer, who was a Genoese by extraction, and spoke freely whatever he thought, did not content himself with naming the proprietors, but added their characters also. Among those whom he spared the least, he chanced to mention one of my relations. I began to laugh. "Softly, Mr. Captain," said I, "I ask quarter for this last gentleman, for you know that I am one of his family."—"Of his family?" cried he, with surprise mingled with confusion ; "how can that be?"—"I will tell you," replied I ; "my father was a noble Genoese, but having become a bankrupt to a large amount, was obliged to pass over into Spain. He settled at Seville, where he established his affairs by marrying a lady of the house of Guzman, which name I bear preferably to my own, for two reasons : first, to secure to myself a succession which might otherwise have escaped me ; and, secondly, because being at least as much the son

of my mother as my father, I thought myself entitled to make choice of whichever of their two names would confer most honour on me."

"You perhaps imagine," said Favello, "that you are speaking of circumstances with which I am not at all acquainted; but you are mistaken. I am particularly intimate with two of your cousins, who have more than once conversed with me respecting your father. They have told me that he was a shrewd, intelligent man; that he was taken prisoner by an Algerine corsair; and that, after having recovered his liberty through the love which a lady at Algiers conceived for him, he went to Seville in search of his correspondent, where he captivated a lady of quality and married her. You are, then, the son of that illustrious house?"—"At your service," replied I, smiling again. "Know then," continued he, "that Signor Don Bertrand, your father's eldest brother, is full of years, still unmarried, and one of the richest nobles in Genoa."—"You tell me what I was ignorant of," said I; "for I have never seen him, and my mother never had any correspondence with him."—"I am surprised," said he, "that you have not already made yourself known to him. Your relations are certainly of great consequence in this country, and I know not what should prevent your seeing them."—"What would you have me do?" answered I; "would you have me announce my name before people who do not know me, and who will naturally be apt to discredit what a man says who has only his own word as a security. No, no, I stand in no need of their acquaintance, for I want nothing of

them. Let us remain as we are. Though they should know that I am here, as a stranger, it is not for me to make the first advances."—"You are right," said Favello; "but allow me to call and apprise them to-morrow morning of your arrival. I am persuaded that I shall no sooner have informed them than they will behave with proper attention towards you."

"You are a man of prudence and good understanding," replied I to the captain, "and may therefore do what you think best. Only recollect to put no restraint on their inclinations, for it is by no means my wish to intrude myself on their acquaintance."

While we were conversing in this manner, Favello had a very handsome collation of the best fruits and sweetmeats served up, which he had prepared on purpose for me, and on which he must have expended the greater part of the pistoles I had presented him with. We still continued to talk together, and the officer, who was perfectly well acquainted with my uncle and cousins, told me so many particulars relating to them, that I soon knew almost as much of their affairs as my own. Night coming on obliged us to re-enter the harbour, where we left the galley, and I took the captain home with me to my inn, where we supped with the gentlemen who lodged there. After supper these gentlemen invited me to play a game with them, saying they had not forgotten the forty pistoles I had won of them the preceding day, and that it was but just I should give them their revenge. I consented; and, feeling myself in good cue for playing, I said to Favello, "At least, Mr

Captain, you will recollect we go halves this time." He replied with a smile, "that he thought me so lucky that he should be proud to be my partner." Fortune favoured me from the very commencement to the end of the game. I won a hundred pistoles, which I divided with the captain. This was the more agreeable to him as it did not hurt his pride. Thus I gained his friendship by degrees, so that he could not possibly refuse me the favour I expected of him. He did not fail to keep his promise of going the next day to my relations to announce to them the arrival of the Abbot Don Guzman at Genoa. You will readily imagine that he gave them a fine account of my person, merit, and generosity; for in the afternoon of the same day they called at the inn, completely dressed out for the occasion. My majordomo, to whom I had given my instructions, met them at the door, and conducted them to my apartment, where I received them with a grave face, but with much civility. At first there came only two, both children of a senator who had been dead five or six years, and who was one of my father's brothers. A third next made his appearance, the son of a sister of my father's, still living. They loaded me with compliments, and made an offer of their house, credit, and purse, because Sayavedra had given them to understand that I wanted neither. If nothing else could convince them that I was a very rich abbot, what they observed in my apartment was sufficient to impress them with that opinion of me. I had taken care to spread negligently on the table my gold chain, various other jewels, and the Milan casket

with the lid open, in which their sharp eyes doubtless espied part of the pistoles it contained.

My uncle, who was the chief of the family, came last. It was particularly to him that I owed a grudge. He supported himself on a large stick, and seemed to walk with difficulty. I could no longer discern that venerable appearance, which had pleased me so much when I first saw him; on the contrary, my blood seemed to curdle at the sight of this malicious old ape who, with his assistant sham devils, had amused himself so cruelly at my expense. In spite of these painful recollections, however, I failed not to receive him more graciously than my cousins, who, shortly after taking their leave, left us alone together. The old gentleman began by assuring me of his extreme joy at the sight of the son of a brother who had ever been dear to him; then surveying me from head to foot, he declared that I was very like my father, and that he felt proud of a connection so likely to do honour to the family. He then complained that I had not ventured to take up my lodging with him, where I should have found apartments more suitable than any at an inn for a man of my rank and character. I thanked him very politely, and told him that my cousins also had made an offer of their house, but that I had declined such an accommodation, being very unwilling to inconvenience any of my relatives during the short stay I should make at Genoa, whither I had come merely to ascertain the condition of the family, as much for my own satisfaction, as for that of my mother, who had desired to be kindly remembered.

These last words presented an opportunity to Don Bertrand to make inquiries respecting my mother and her children. I replied that I was her only son, and it had almost escaped me that I had two fathers; but I restrained my tongue in time, and praised my mother up to the skies. My uncle, impatient to relate to me what I knew quite as well as him, interrupted my eulogium, saying—

T “I must tell you, my dear nephew, an adventure which happened to us six or seven years ago. A little rascal made his appearance in Genoa half naked. He ran about the streets telling all those who were fools enough to listen to him that he was the son of your father; and this young beggar, who could not be mistaken for anything but what he was, flattered himself that some of our family would be weak enough to believe him on his word, and humane enough to have compassion on his misery. I threw myself in his way, with the intention of being revenged on him for the discredit he brought upon the family, and I was fortunate enough to meet him. I allured him into my house by soft words, and by promising that I would, the next day, introduce him to a gentleman who would not fail to be of service to him. When I got him home, I put some questions to him, which soon convinced me that he was a little scapegrace. I accordingly determined that he should be punished for his presumption, and perceiving that he was dying with hunger, I sent him to bed without any supper in a magnificent chamber, where I caused him to be tormented all night long by certain devils in masks, who tossed him in a blanket to his heart's content.”

In relating this story to me the old rascal laughed with all his might, and it was with the greatest difficulty that I could restrain the rage I felt. I, however, managed to dissemble, and, forcing a sort of grin, I agreed with him that the adventure was comical enough.

"All that I regret," continued my uncle, "is, that he disappeared the next morning, and is still at large. Could I have secured him, it was my intention to have inflicted a much severer punishment on him for his presumption, in daring to assert that he bore any affinity to our family."

After this declaration I changed the subject, and a quarter of an hour after the old gentleman took his leave, and I accompanied him to the street door, paying him all the respect due to my father's elder brother

CHAPTER XLIV.

GUZMAN GIVES A GRAND ENTERTAINMENT TO HIS RELATIONS, AND MAKES THEM PAY PRETTY HANDSOMELY FOR IT.

AFTER dinner I desired Sayavedra to go out and purchase four good trunks of the same size. While he was gone on this commission, Favello called upon me, to give me an account of the conversations he had with my relations respecting me, and he assured me all the family were charmed with my person, especially Signor Don Bertrand, my uncle.

"This good old man," continued he, "says that

he almost fancied that it was his dear brother he saw and heard speak, so much was he struck with your resemblance to your father; that he regretted to find that you had embraced the ecclesiastical life, and should propose to you to throw off your cassock and marry one of your nieces on the mother's side, and that though this young lady had no property of her own, it was his intention to provide well for her, she being his particular favourite."

In conclusion, the Captain protested to me, that my uncle had conceived a great regard for me. All this, however, did not in the least deter me in my intentions towards him.

I went to return the visit the next morning, first to Don Bertrand, who, in the conversation which we had together, took occasion to observe, that he thought that an only son, as I was, ought rather to think of keeping up the family name than to consecrate himself to a state of life which deprived the family of one of its best branches. I might have answered, that he, having always been a bachelor, had himself wronged the family quite as much as if he also had embraced the ecclesiastical life. He then named the lady whom he had selected for my wife. To amuse him, I pretended not to be much averse to his wishes, and made an end of my visit by requesting his company to dine with me the next day. He pressed hard to be excused on account of his great age; but when I represented to him that none but relations would be of the party except Captain Favello, the common friend of the family, he allowed himself to be prevailed

on, and promised to come, that I might be convinced, as he was pleased to say, of the great regard he felt for a nephew whom Heaven had sent him. After this I visited my cousins, one after another and they all promised to join the party. Nothing was now necessary but to prepare a magnificent dinner for them. My landlord told me to leave this to him, and he would undertake that my guests should be handsomely provided for.

My major-domo, who returned home while I was speaking to the landlord, told me that he had purchased four trunks as I desired. I looked at them, and was well pleased. He asked me what I intended to do with them. I told him he had only to follow me, and he would soon know. I ordered him to take our casket under his arm, and conducted him to the shop of one of the richest goldsmiths in Genoa, whom I requested to lend me for about twenty-four hours a rich service of silver plate and dishes, in consideration of an honest profit, and depositing the value of the plate in his hands. The goldsmith agreed to the proposal, we agreed as to the sum I should pay him for the loan, and choosing the service I liked best, I deposited nine thousand francs with the goldsmith by way of security. After which, I desired Sayavedra to fetch the two trunks, put the plate in them himself, and have them carried home, which he did accordingly.

All my relations assembled at my lodgings the next day. My landlord, who piqued himself on being an excellent cook, gave us a specimen of his ability in

the difficult art of making ragouts, which he served up in so delicious a style, that my cousins, and even my uncle, confessed that they had never eaten better. If they had not expected such excellent fare, how much more were they surprised when they saw the sideboard set out with elegant plate, and the plates and dishes of the same metal. They could not help observing, that a traveller ran great risk in carrying such a service of plate about with him, and particularly in Italy, where thieves so plentifully abound. The good Don Bertrand, who had made the same reflections at sight of the display of silver, applauded their opinion.

“It is your own fault, my nephew,” cried he; “you might easily have avoided living at an inn in a city where you have so many relations. I grant you that this is the best inn in Genoa; but that signifies nothing. You are yet young, and I, having had more experience, would caution you against trusting to the goodness of the locks or padlocks on your trunks, because either the landlord, landlady, their children, or servants, always keep two or three keys to every room in their house. If you believe me in this respect,” continued he, “since you refuse to take up your residence at my house, you will at least send your plate and jewels thither, where they would be in safety until your departure, were there a million of gold.”

I thanked my uncle for his obliging anxiety; and pretending that I had no fear of being robbed, I told him, that when I set out for Rome I had taken the precaution of leaving my most valuable effects in the

hands of our ambassador, and that in respect to the plate, although it was troublesome to a traveller, I was not sorry that I had brought it with me, as in case of necessity I could sell it much more easily than jewels. All the family seemed to acquiesce in this reason; and as I mentioned the ambassador, my cousins began to speak of that minister. They said that they had seen him as he passed through Genoa on his road to Rome. Upon which, to convince them that I stood well with his Excellence, I showed them the portrait he had presented me with. This was quite sufficient to persuade them of the ambassador's great esteem and friendship for me.

Don Bertrand, still harping upon the danger of keeping my plate at an inn, returned once more to the charge, and I was obliged to quiet his apprehensions by promising that I would have it all packed in the two trunks in which I told him I usually locked it up, and send it to his house immediately after dinner. We changed the subject, and began to converse on my intended marriage. My uncle, addressing himself to me, said, that I ought to think seriously of marrying in my youth, and not to defer it to a more advanced age, to have the agonies of leaving orphan children behind me. He then represented to me all the disagreeables of an ecclesiastical life, and concluded his harangue by enlarging on the perfections of the young lady whom he wished me to marry.

"She is my niece by the mother's side," added he; "of noble blood, and of ample beauty to make up for the deficiency of her fortune; besides which, she

has a mother who will cherish, as the apple of her eye, both you and your children."

As the old buck seemed so determined on this marriage, I thought it more prudent not to profess myself averse to his wishes.

"You are so persuasive," said I, "my dear uncle, that you have already destroyed my taste for an ecclesiastical life; and I feel convinced that I shall be perfectly happy in receiving a wife from your hands. Permit me, however, to represent to you, that I already enjoy a benefice of ten thousand crowns a year, and am in daily expectation of fifteen thousand, which some relations of my mother, who have great influence at court, have given me hopes of. It will be most gratifying for me, should I attain my wishes, to have those two handsome presentations to bestow on the children of my cousins."

They all approved highly of my resolution, and gave me a thousand thanks in anticipation of the honour I intended them.

Towards the end of the repast, Don Bertrand asked Captain Favello if he had received any orders for his departure.

"Yes," answered he, "and we must set sail in three days for Barcelona. We are already very busy in shipping our goods."

I was overjoyed at this news, which informed me that I had no time to lose. As soon as dinner was over, I ordered my major-domo, aloud, to lock up my plate and casket, and carry them himself to my uncle's house. The room was cleared in less than an hour, and in the presence of my relations,

whilst I kept up the conversation with them. I insisted on accompanying my uncle, where I had the satisfaction of seeing, not the two trunks full of my plate, but two similar ones that we had filled the evening before with bags of sand of nearly the same weight, and which Sayavedra had very dexterously exchanged.

It was not possible to have made a better beginning. I continued as successfully. Captain Favello returned at night to the inn; he told me that he regretted the precipitate departure of the galleys, which would so soon deprive him of my agreeable society.

"It is by no means certain," said I, "that we shall so soon separate. We may possibly be longer together than you imagine."

He reflected a moment on what I said, and then asked me if I had really any idea of returning to Spain.

"Yes," answered I; "for know, that it was not so much the pleasure of seeing my relations that brought me to Genoa as the desire to be revenged for an affront offered me by a Genoese who was my rival at Rome. This I tell you," added I, "having found you to be a man of prudence and discretion, in whom I may confide."

Nothing further was necessary to engage Favello in my service.

"Tell me the name," said he, with enthusiasm, "of the rascal who has insulted you, and I ask but four and twenty hours to fully satisfy your vengeance."—"Captain," replied I, "I am much indebted to you for taking up my cause so warmly; and were I in want of an avenger, I could not have a better champion than yourself. But you judge ill of me if

you think that I want either strength or courage to avenge myself. I know where my gentleman lodges, and my blow is sure. All that I have to request of you is, to allow my baggage to be conveyed privately on board your galley, on the eve previous to her sailing. I have more reasons than one for wishing that even my relations may be ignorant of my departure, and entreat you therefore to keep it secret."

"As to that," replied the officer, "depend upon me." Then, alluding again to my affair of honour: "You cannot imagine," continued he, "how mortified I feel, that my services should be refused in the only opportunity that I may have of testifying my zeal for you!"

He said this with such apparent concern, that I embraced and endeavoured to console him by saying, "That he would have many opportunities in the course of our voyage of manifesting his friendship towards me."

With similar mutual expressions of friendship towards each other, we parted. The first thing I did the next morning was to send back all the plate to the goldsmith's by my men, who brought me in return my pistoles which were there in pledge. Scarcely had I deposited them in safety again when one of my cousins called upon me to say that my uncle Don Bertrand expected me to dine with him the next day. I did not fail to accept of this invitation, and found the whole family assembled when I arrived at his house. We sat down to table in good spirits, and our conversation was lively.

Before dinner was over, my majordomo, as I had previously desired him, entered the parlour, and, coming up to me with a note in his hand—

“Colonel Don Antonio,” said he, “has just been to inquire for you at the inn, and, not finding you there, has charged me to deliver this letter.”

I opened it without ceremony, and took great pains to read it so loud that my uncle, who sat very near me, might hear every word. It ran thus—

“I am to be married the day after to-morrow, and I shall fully expect the pleasure of your company on the occasion. I shall never forgive you if you refuse to join us. In addition to this, I have another favour to beg of you. You have often shown me some excellent jewels of your mother’s, I beseech you to lend them to me. My mistress has not dared to bring her own to this country with her. We request them for two days only, and promise to take great care of them. I flatter myself that you will confer this obligation on your friend,
“DON ANTONIO DE MENDOZA.”

After having read this letter, I assumed a troubled and mortified air, and, having reflected for some time, I said to Sayavedra—“You do not, of course, know the purport of this epistle. Don Antonio requests the loan of my jewels, to decorate his intended wife on the day of their marriage. You well know,” continued I, “that I left all my diamonds at the ambassador’s at Rome. Lose no time, then, in informing the Colonel that I am much vexed that it is not in my power to oblige him.”—“I fear, sir,” replied the major-domo, “he will think it a mere evasion,

and that you refuse him.”—“He will do me great injustice by such a thought,” replied I; “sooner, therefore, than risk the possibility of such an idea, I would hire some jewels. I should imagine that if I place good security in the hands of some jeweller, he would be glad for a very trifling consideration to lend me what I want for two or three days.”

“Who can doubt that?” said my uncle. “But why,” continued he, “need you be at the expense of hiring what you may have for nothing? Do you suppose that we have not as fine jewels as you can procure elsewhere, and are we not disposed to oblige you in any way? Your relations will take pleasure in obliging this or any friend of yours.”

“Mendoza is certainly one of my best friends,” cried I; “he is a man of quality, who was very serviceable to me at Rome, and to whom I am indebted for my introduction to the Spanish ambassador. The colonel, whose regiment is at Milan, has won the heart of a rich widow in that city, who, in opposition to the wishes of some of her relations, has consented to espouse him. They are come hither, therefore, to solemnize their marriage. He is a man of the nicest honour, to whom I should not be under the slightest apprehensions in lending jewels to the value of a hundred thousand francs.”—“Be he what he may,” interrupted Don Bertrand, “since he has expressed a wish to see his wife decorated with diamonds, he shall have that satisfaction.” Overjoyed that he bit the hook so greedily, I told him with transport—“Really, my dear uncle, you are too generous, and I ought to be

apprehensive of intruding too much upon your goodness."

"No compliments, my dear nephew," replied he with precipitation; "I will lend you my diamonds with all my heart. To convince you, I will this moment go and choose some of the finest for your use." Thus saying, he rose from the table and went to his closet, whence he returned, and put into my hands a case containing jewels to the amount of from seven to eight thousand francs. My three cousins, seeing the old gentleman treat me in this kind manner, did not wish to be thought less generous than he. They all promised to lend me some, and sure enough they brought me the next morning jewels to nearly the same amount. The most avaricious of the three came last, and in the course of a very long chat contrived to turn the conversation upon my benefice. He gave me to understand that if I was so well off as to wish to dispose of it, and would be inclined to resign it in favour of one of his own children, in preference to either of his cousins, a present of a hundred pistoles should accompany his thanks.

I made answer, "that his eldest son having the advantage over all the other children in respect to age, certainly appeared to me the most proper to succeed to my benefice; but that, having obtained it for nothing, I should resign it on the same terms, not being a man to make such sort of bargains."

I perceived plainly that this answer did not by any means displease him. Just at this moment Sayavedra entered the room, having under his arm a small casket containing my gold chain. "Do you still

wish," said he, "that I should go where you desired me?"—"You ought to have been there and back again ere this," replied I. "Recollect only, before you apply to a goldsmith, to make inquiry in the neighbourhood as to his respectability. You will then get my chain weighed, and return to tell me its exact weight."

Though my cousin had already seen this chain, he requested to look at it again, and admired extremely both the workmanship and the fineness of the gold. Then turning to Sayavedra—"My friend," said he, "tell my servant, whom you will find below, to accompany you to a goldsmith's who lives hard by, and who will tell you conscientiously the value of the chain."

My squire was soon back. I inquired how much the goldsmith valued it at. "Six hundred and fifty-five crowns," answered Sayavedra. "Well, then," said I, "just return and request the loan of six hundred upon it, which I will repay him in three days, with whatever he may demand for interest."

"Honest man as he is," said my cousin, "he will make no scruple of taking three per cent. for three days as well as for six months, saying that it makes no difference to him. I regret much," continued he, "that I do not happen at this moment to have sufficient ready money at hand myself; but I know a man of probity who will be satisfied with only two per cent."

This man of probity was no other than himself, who, notwithstanding that he hoped to obtain a good benefice for nothing, rejoiced at the opportunity of

depriving the goldsmith of this little profit. I failed not to assure this good cousin that he would much oblige me by getting it done for me.

"Not that I am in great distress for money," said I, "as you may see." At the same time I drew from my pocket two large purses full of pistoles, which I showed to him. "It is merely by way of precaution that I wish to put my chain in pledge; for as we shall play very high at the wedding of my friend the colonel, I do not like to be at all short of money." My cousin assured me, "that in two hours at furthest, the six hundred crowns should be at my service." Then taking the casket out of Sayavedra's hand, I opened it for an instant, just that my cousin might see that the chain was in it, and after having shut it again, delivered it to his servant, who returned in about an hour with the six hundred crowns.

Unfortunately for my worthy cousin, my majordomo, in bringing the casket back from the goldsmith's under his cloak, had dexterously drawn out the gold chain, and substituted a brass one in its stead.

Favello came to sup with me at night. He told me it was time for me to strike my blow, for that I must sleep on board the next night, as the galleys were to sail before daybreak the following morning.

"'Tis well," answered I; "my business shall be settled in less than four-and-twenty hours' time, and I will not fail to be on board by to-morrow evening. If you will assist me by sending some of your people about midnight for my boxes, my departure will be more secret."

The captain promised this, and took his leave of me shortly after. We passed almost the whole of the next day in getting everything in readiness for our departure. We packed up our best effects in our two largest boxes, and filled with rags the counterparts of those which my honoured uncle kept in his closet for me with such pious care. A quarter of an hour before midnight, four of Captain Favello's men conveyed our two largest boxes on board, leaving our two others to satisfy my landlord, whom I desired Sayavedra to tell not to be anxious on my account, for that I was going to sup at a friend's, where I might very likely pass the whole night at play. We at length got safe on board our captain's galley. He had been rather uneasy at my being so late, and asked me the first thing, how my affair of honour had terminated.

"My revenge is satisfied to my heart's content," replied I. "I rejoice at it extremely," said he; "for I must acknowledge that I was beginning to be a little anxious for your safety, the result of such an enterprise being always uncertain."

Favello had caused a little chamber to be fitted up for me, into which he conducted me, and where I found my two boxes, and a table covered with delicate meats. We sat down, and, after partaking of a good supper, lay down to take some repose. But our several cares kept us both awake. For my part I was all night terribly alarmed lest some cursed contrary wind should detain us in port, and afford my relations sufficient time to gain information of my flight, and to obtain an order from the senate to

have me arrested. My fears, however, were groundless. At daybreak I heard a noise which announced to me that the galleys were on the point of departure. I looked through a hole in my chamber, and perceived with joy that the whole crew had begun to ply their oars. We were soon out of port; then taking advantage of the wind which was directly in our favour, we spread our sails and were soon out of sight.

CHAPTER XLV.

GUZMAN, AFTER HAVING ROBBED HIS RELATIONS, AND RE-EMBARKED FOR SPAIN, IS IN IMMINENT DANGER OF PERISHING AT SEA, AND HAS THE MISFORTUNE TO LOSE SAYAVEDRA.

WE had already doubled Cape Noli, when the captain informed me that if the wind did not change for three days, we should have a most agreeable voyage. We watered at Monaco, and the next morning, having put to sea again with a favourable breeze, we reached the Isles of Hieres, where we passed the night. The third day we anchored at Chateau d'If, in sight of Marseilles, and the day following at Roses.

I was congratulating myself on so fortunate a voyage, when my joy was interrupted by word being brought me that Sayavedra had the seasickness, and felt extremely ill. I ran to see him immediately, and found that he had a very violent fever upon him. I was much afflicted at it, but

consoled myself with the idea that we would soon reach Barcelona, where he should have every attention paid to him. The morning of the fifth day dawned very differently to the preceding ones; the clouds seemed lowering, and there was scarcely a breath of air stirring. We still hoped, however, by dint of hard rowing, to sleep that night at Barcelona. But we found our mistake two hours after. So furious a storm arose, that our destruction appeared inevitable. In vain did we attempt to make to land; the oar became quite useless, and we were obliged to keep out to sea the whole of that night. What a night of horror it was for us! Sometimes the sea raised its waves to the clouds, and at others, opening its bosom, presented to our eyes the awful abyss by which we were surrounded.

Who in the midst of such a scene can attempt to paint the consternation so evidently depicted on every countenance on board, and the various indications of fear created by the dread of approaching death? Some invoked the saints most honoured in their own country; others offered vows; some on their knees were addressing the most fervent prayers to Heaven in private, whilst others confessed their sins aloud, and implored pardon of the Deity. Some few, though death was apparently before their eyes, were still inquiring of the pilot whether all hopes were at an end. He answered, that there was nothing to fear, and they seemed as willing to trust this liar, as a father, who, seeing his only son dying, eagerly gives credit to the quack who assures him

of his speedy recovery. | For my part, like another Jonas, I was buried in a profound reverie all this while, and, believing myself the cause of this dreadful storm, said within myself: Wretch, now wilt thou meet with the punishment due to thee for having robbed thy relations. Of what service will their gold be to thee? The sea will in a short time swallow up both thyself and thy ill-gotten riches. For thyself, thou hast well deserved it, and those only are to be pitied who have been so unfortunate as to embark in the company of a scoundrel who has incurred the vengeance of heaven.

With this impression, I awaited death with resignation. It was not so near at hand, however, as we all imagined. The weather suddenly changed, hope succeeded despair, and joy desolation. That night proved fatal only to the unfortunate Sayavedra. This faithful follower, whose brain was already turned by his fever, the violence of which was increasing every moment, lost his reason entirely when he heard the cries and lamentations which the fear of shipwreck excited in the galley. My footman watched him that night, but dropping asleep from fatigue, Sayavedra got up in one of his fits, which gave him new strength, and threw himself from the side of the poop into the sea. The soldier who was on guard heard something fall into the sea, and informed the pilot of it. This made a great noise on board, and every one was anxious to ascertain what it could be; and after half-an-hour's search, Sayavedra was found to be missing. No possible grief could be greater

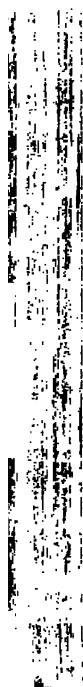
than mine when I first learned this distressing news. No one has ever wept more bitterly for a brother than I did for my dear Sayavedra. I was inconsolable at his loss, and truly I had good reason to regret him. The joy of all on board the next morning, at finding the sea as calm as it had been boisterous the preceding day, had but little effect on my spirits, now that death had deprived me of my faithful servant and companion.

We entered the port of Barcelona towards noon. I had already prepared Favello not to expect I should make a long stay in that city, having told him after the storm, that I had made a vow to visit our Lady of Montserrat the moment I landed, and that from thence I intended to proceed to my mother's at Andalusia. He could not oppose so pious an intention; and besides, not being able to leave his galley that day, he told me sadly, as I was taking leave of him, that in all probability we should never see each other again, unless I intended to stay the whole of the next day in Barcelona. He then inquired where I should take up my lodging; I named an inn which I knew, fully resolved, however, never to go near it. Sensible of the great proofs of friendship I had received at his hands, I embraced him tenderly at parting, and presenting him with a ring worth a hundred pistoles, requested he would wear it for my sake. He accepted it with tears in his eyes, fearing it was the last farewell, and on my side, feeling myself too much affected, I hastened away, to spare him the pain of reading in my looks the cause of our separation.

My first care when I arrived at the inn where I







caused my trunks to be carried, was to have three good mules bought for my use. You may be sure I paid dear for them; but this signified but little in my present situation. In addition to the twenty-five thousand francs which I now possessed, four thousand more had fallen to me by the death of my companion in fortune. I hired also a muleteer who was well acquainted with the roads, and we left the city the following morning as soon as the gates were open. My impatience to leave Barcelona as soon as possible may easily be conceived; a felucca might have arrived there, with orders from my relations to arrest me. It was incumbent on me, therefore, to be active. To so prudent a fear I added the precaution of avoiding all the high roads, telling my followers, that as my sole object in travelling was my own pleasure, it was my wish to reach the Ebro as fast as possible; that, as I rode along its banks, I might be gratified with a view of the charming landscapes on both sides of it.

CHAPTER XLVI.

GUZMAN, ON HIS JOURNEY TO SARAGOSSA, MAKES ACQUAINTANCE AND FALLS IN LOVE WITH A YOUNG WIDOW—PROGRESS AND CONCLUSION OF THIS NEW PASSION.

I STEERED clear of the high roads, for the reasons I have already told you, and spurring on my mule through all the by-ways towards the Ebro, intending to coast it from thence to Saragossa, I travelled with

as much speed as fear. In three days we reached the banks of the river. My mind became now more at ease, and I began to believe myself beyond the reach of pursuit, and to congratulate myself on my riches, without reflecting that I was travelling through a country in which there were as many robbers as in Italy. I had taken the precaution, however, to purchase two firelocks in Barcelona, with which I armed my footman and the muleteer. In addition to this, I concealed my jewels about me so cautiously that no one could perceive them without stripping me.

I shall pass over in silence, friendly reader, the adventures I met with on the banks of the Ebro, which are not worthy to be related, and proceed to make you acquainted with one which fortune prepared for me between Ossera and Saragossa. Night surprised me near a fine abbey, which I took for a castle, and which I approached in the hope of obtaining a lodging; but finding that a wretched village lay under it, I changed my opinion. We stopped before a paltry hovel, at which a sign was suspended, and, knocking loudly at the door, demanded admission. Nobody answered us at first, but at length a country fellow appeared at one of the windows. This was the landlord, who, having surveyed me from top to toe by the light of a lamp which he held in his hand, began to laugh, saying—"Do not waste any further time here, Signor Cavalier, my house is not fit to receive you; go to the abbey, where you will meet with a hearty welcome, and be more suitably entertained." I answered the peasant, that I would follow his advice; and, as we were ignorant of the road, re-

quested him to conduct us to the convent, at the same time slipping a few reals into his hand, to add more efficacy to my entreaty.

The monastery stood on an eminence, so that we were nearly half an hour ascending it by a very rough road, which to me, who was already much fatigued, was very distressing. Nevertheless, as there is nothing so good as to be entirely free from unpleasantry, so neither is there anything so bad but has something agreeable to recommend it. The innkeeper informed me that this was a convent for nuns, all of whom were ladies of quality; that it was one of the richest in Spain, and received all strangers that passed through the village with hospitality. I felt, without knowing wherefore, that this report pleased me; either from reviving my natural predilection for the fair sex, or from a presentiment of what would happen to me. When we reached the great gate we rang several times before anybody from within made answer. At length a voice asked us, through the wicket, what we wanted. The innkeeper, who was known to the porter, told him, "that we were looking for a lodging; that he could not entertain us himself, and had, consequently, conducted us to the abbey." The muleteer added, by my orders, "that an asylum was requested, for one night only, for a foreign nobleman, who had lost his way travelling to Saragossa." The porter answered, "that the convent-gate was always shut at eight o'clock, and that it was now nine; that notwithstanding such was the rule, he would go, from the consideration he naturally had for persons of quality, and inform the lady abbess of my situation, and obey her orders."

I was obliged to wait with patience at the gate for her answer. The porter at length returned, and informed us that the abbess could not think of opening the gate at such an unseasonable hour to gentlemen entirely unknown to her. This refusal vexed me extremely. I dismounted from my mule, and advanced towards the wicket; and, speaking myself to the porter, entreated him to return to the abbess, and tell her, on my behalf, that if she knew the favour she would confer on me, in affording me a retreat for that night, she would cease to be inexorable. The porter told me, "it was to no purpose to persist in requesting what she would never permit." Not being able to influence the porter in my favour by prayers, I offered a bribe, which he refused with disdain, and shut the wicket in my face. I feared there was now no chance of sleeping that night in the monastery, and, yielding to necessity, told my servants to lead the three mules back again to the peasant's; that, for my own part, rather than be stived up in that wretched tavern, I felt desirous to pass away a few hours where I was, in listening to the murmuring of the Ebro.

It was a lovely night. I strolled round the house, observing with an eye of curiosity whatever I could discern by the light of the stars, which shone extremely bright. I followed a sloping path which led me under a balcony that commanded a view of the river. I sat down at the foot of a tree opposite the balcony, which I considered attentively, supposing it to be my lady abbess's apartment. I could perceive a light, and shortly after a confused noise of female voices struck my ear, then all of a sudden

a profound silence ensued, which was interrupted in its turn by a Spanish song warbled by a very delicate voice. The singer seemed to please her company exceedingly, and she was much applauded. Another lady then sang an Italian air with which I was well acquainted, and was equally complimented. So immoderate a desire then possessed me to amuse the ladies with my melodious voice, that I could scarcely have the patience to hear this song out. I was half inclined to sing the same over again, for it was one of those for which I had been most applauded at the Grand Duke's concert at Florence. However, I was prudent enough to spare the lady the mortification of the comparison; and having remembered another air which had particularly pleased the Grand Duchess, I chose that in its stead.

Hoping thus agreeably to surprise these recluses by my fine voice, as well as by the singularity of the adventure, I sang, and, when I had finished the air, had the pleasure of hearing exclamations of astonishment mingled with admiration. The glass door of the balcony flew open, and several ladies hurried forward in the hope of seeing who it could be that sang so sweetly. I affected not to observe them, and, after having paused a moment, began my air again. As soon as I ceased, I could hear myself again applauded by the ladies, who, however, in the hopes of being favoured with another, communicated their admiration only in whispers. I perceived their design, and was malicious enough to provoke them by remaining silent, without stirring from the spot. One of the ladies, more impatient than the rest, then addressed me, saying — "That

one song from so charming a voice was but very insufficient for so many ladies who were so passionately fond of music." "'Tis too little," replied I in Italian, "for so many ladies, but far too much for a pilgrim, to whom they have so cruelly refused shelter."

My answer excited great laughter, from which they supposed I was the stranger who had requested to lodge in the abbey. "Signor Cavalier," cried one of them, "be not displeased at the refusal that was returned you. It is a law established in this convent not to admit any strange gentleman after eight o'clock in the evening, but your charming voice has had such influence, that the lady abbess consents, for once, to dispense with the regulation, and, unless you are so true a knight-errant as to prefer passing the night on the banks of this river, has just given order to open the gates to you." I made answer, "that I was rejoiced to learn that to obtain shelter from my lady abbess it was only necessary to set my request to music." This little trait of raillery excited their laughter afresh, more especially as it was the lady abbess herself to whom I was speaking. They were by no means displeased with my apparent gaiety, and, as they wished to take a nearer view of my figure, of which they could form but an indistinct idea where I sat, they entreated me to walk in, telling me "that the lady abbess would soon be reconciled to me."

At these words, to show them that I desired nothing better than such an invitation, I rose instantly, and bowing to the company in the most respectful manner as I passed the balcony, I soon regained the abbey-gate, where the porter met me, and, desiring me to

follow him, conducted me into a large and very elegant parlour. Here I was received by the lady abbess and a secular lady; they were both seated on cushions of violet-coloured damask, and six or seven nuns stood behind them. All these ladies kept profoundly silent, and preserved an air of gravity which would have disconcerted any other but myself; but I had so often visited the great at Rome, that I knew well what behaviour to adopt. I accosted them, therefore, in a jocose manner, and some lucky sallies which escaped me soon dissipated their affected gravity. I then complained in so good-natured a manner of the law which forbids them to admit strangers into the convent at night, that I soon succeeded in amusing them.

In the meantime a small table was laid out with some venison pasties, wine, and sweetmeats. I needed no very pressing invitation to eat and drink, for I acquitted myself like a hungry traveller as I was, not forgetting, however, to whisper occasional compliments to the lady abbess, as well as to the secular lady, whom I thought very handsome. She had an air of youth and peculiar sprightliness which rendered her particularly engaging. Some of the nuns remarking that I admired her, asked me if I did not think that their community had reason to be proud of the acquisition of such a lady. This inspired me with a thousand thoughts in her favour. I spoke nothing but Italian, and being dressed also in the Italian fashion, I easily passed for one of that nation. Such of the ladies as were acquainted with that language were so condescending as not to speak to me in Spanish. When they perceived that I had done

eating, they contrived to turn the conversation on music, and one and all entreated me to favour them with one of the newest Italian airs. I consented willingly, and, animated by degrees by the praises bestowed on me at the end of each couplet, such a rage for singing possessed me, that no sooner had I finished one song than I began another. As to the company, and especially the secular lady, they were so delighted to listen to me, that they seemed not to have the least thought of retiring, though it was already after midnight. I really believe that day would have surprised us in the parlour, had not the abbess, for the sake of preserving the decorum of a monastic life, thought proper to put an end to a pastime so contrary to their established regulations, by reminding the ladies that they were imposing on my good nature. "Our guest," said she, "cannot but be fatigued; besides, you ought to reserve some pleasure for to-morrow. He will not, I trust, think of departing before we have had the pleasure of seeing him again." This was a polite way of desiring me to sing no more; so that, wishing the company good-night, I joined the porter, who was waiting at the parlour-door to conduct me to the apartment that was prepared for me.

I was not a little astonished in entering to find my servants there, whom they had been kind enough to send for, with my baggage, and who had been entertained like myself. I found also that even my three mules had not been forgotten, and that, thanks to their master's fine voice, they had had a good bellyful of provender in the convent stables. The chamber in which I lay, occupied my attention for

some time. There was in the furniture, although plain, a certain air of simplicity far superior to magnificence; and my bed could not have been better prepared even for the Archbishop of Saragossa. Having got into it, I told my servants to follow the porter to their beds. I then called the muleteer to me, who was no fool, and charged him to be sure to ascertain who the secular lady was whom I had seen with the lady abbess. He acquitted himself well of this commission.

"Sir," said he, when I rose the next morning, "I have questioned one of the footmen respecting the lady of whom you wish to know, and he has told me every particular without hesitation. She is a widow, as he says, very rich, and of one of the best families in Saragossa. She has many admirers; and, among others, a nephew of the lady abbess, a young man of about two-and-twenty at most, wonderfully well made, and extremely handsome. Unless, however, I am much mistaken," added he, "my mistress is but very indifferent to his addresses; while, on the contrary, my lady abbess, who has a great affection for this unlicked cub, is most anxious to promote the match. This is all," said the muleteer, "that I have learnt from the footman; but the porter has just informed me that this young widow, who arrived at the abbey only an hour or two before you, intends to return home this afternoon."

At the word widow, I sighed deeply. It brought to my recollection my fair one at Florence, and I at first imagined that I was sighing for her; but to say the truth, I soon felt that my heart, less intent upon the past than the present, was captivated by the

charms of the widow of Saragossa. I could no longer doubt it when I beheld her again in the parlour, where the abbess, after mass was over, invited me. I appeared there again with all the good humour of the preceding evening. There were but three nuns with the abbess, besides the object of my new passion. The conversation soon became lively and facetious, and was by no means damped by the arrival of several more of the most sprightly nuns in the convent, who joined us soon after. My lovely widow, who possessed a fund of wit, contributed her share, and I applauded, from the bottom of my heart, every little repartee that escaped her lips. She saw plainly that I was in admiration at everything she said, and that I distinguished her from the rest of the company, and she was evidently not a little pleased by my attentions.

In the midst of our laughter, a servant announced to the abbess that Don Antonio de Miras was on the stairs, which seemed to please her extremely; for this was her dear nephew whom she wished to see united to the beautiful widow. His aunt had sent him word the evening before that Donna Lucia (for that was my charmer's name) was at the abbey, and he could not, of course, neglect so favourable an opportunity of waiting upon a lady whom he aspired to marry. The portrait that the muleteer had given me of this young gentleman was by no means flattering, for I never beheld a handsomer cavalier. No woman ever so vain of her beauty but might have been proud to have had such a face. Add to which he was of a handsome figure, and had every appearance of a man of quality. His dress, which was extremely

elegant, added also to his prepossessing appearance. I should certainly have died with jealousy at sight of such a rival, had I not been previously informed that he was by no means eminently gifted with understanding. This thought helped to support me against such formidable disadvantages, and an observation which I afterwards made emboldened me at least to dispute with him the heart of Donna Lucia; for I perceived that this lady, so far from testifying any joy at his arrival, seemed to look upon him with an eye of indifference, and replied very coldly to all his compliments.

Don Antonio and I at first looked at each other like two young cocks; but as it was my interest to be on good terms with him, I loaded him with compliments, and in less than an hour we were the best friends in the world. When dinner hour arrived, the abbess caused two tables to be laid in the parlour, one without the grate for her nephew and myself, and the other within for the ladies. Our repast, which was fit for the first nobleman to sit down to, was seasoned with jests and anecdotes, which amused us all exceedingly. More than half the afternoon was passed away in the same agreeable manner.

I talked, sang, laughed, and in short showed that I could do anything; insomuch that the nuns, though accustomed to receive the visits of gentlemen, assured me that they had never yet seen one possessing such a fund of amusement. In the meantime the hour of separation drew nigh. It was time for the fair widow to set off for Saragossa, if she hoped to arrive there before night. She took leave, therefore, of the lady abbess and the nuns, and ascended into her

litter, which was in waiting for her at the door. As it was my intention to accompany her, I had ordered my equipage also to be in readiness. I vaulted nimbly on my mule, which cut but a sorry figure by the side of Don Antonio's hunter. Besides his having one of the finest horses in Spain, this young gentleman was an experienced horseman, and before we started made his horse pass through a thousand manœuvres with considerable grace. I was extremely mortified that I could not by any means provoke my peaceable and stupid mule to imitate him; my endeavours to make him caper a little, served only to amuse the ladies, who were observing us from the windows.

The Don pranced on one side of the litter, and I trotted on the other, for the sake of conversing with Donna Lucia on the road. We began, or rather I began, to discourse with her, for young Miras took so little part in the conversation, that he seldom went beyond a monosyllable, contenting himself with showing off his elegant person on horseback to the best advantage. Knowing Don Antonio to be no great wit, I should have been a greater simpleton than he, had I not availed myself of so favourable an opportunity. Lucia asked me "if I intended to make a long stay at Saragossa."—"That will depend on the pleasure in store for me at that place," replied I; "should my wishes be realised, I shall remain there a considerable time." A tender glance, with which I accompanied these words, spoke volumes. Lucia understood my meaning, and blushed deeply; but her eyes informed me that she felt not offended, and I was well pleased that I had hazarded this

declaration, since it had not proved disagreeable to her, nor excited the jealousy of Miras, to whom it was a complete enigma.

I was somewhat surprised that so young and lovely a person as Lucia should travel above a league from Saragossa, with a retinue consisting only of a duenna, one lackey, and a muleteer. I had yet to know the privileges of widows in that country, where they enjoy unrestricted freedom. Travelling with so feeble an escort they frequently expose themselves to unexpected and unpleasant rencontres. Thus Donna Lucia, though accompanied by two cavaliers and her own attendants, was somewhat alarmed at a trifling adventure that befell us on our journey. We were already half way to Saragossa, when we perceived at a distance a most beautiful hunter, whose speed was equal to that of Bayarte or Brigliador,* and who, galloping towards us, raised such a cloud of dust that we could not at first distinguish who was the cavalier who rode him; but no sooner could we discern him, than I fancied I saw the furious Rolando before me, such fierceness was in his looks.

When he came up within ten or twelve paces of us, he stopped short to look at me. My foreign dress attracted his attention, and he seemed still more surprised at the familiar manner in which I was conversing with the fair widow. He was himself one of this lady's suitors, and flattered himself with great hopes of winning her, relying upon the opinion he imagined all the world must have of his bravery, to ensure him success over all his rivals. Seeing,

* The names of two chargers; the former belonged to Reynaldos de Montalvan, and the latter to Orlando Furioso.

then, Don Antonio on one side and me on the other, he rode most furiously between Miras and the litter, so that he almost overturned the one and dismounted the other. The lady was much alarmed at this insolent action, and told this bully, in a rage, that the road was wide enough to allow of his passing without presuming to insult persons who deserved more respect. He apologised to Lucia in a tone and manner more insolent than the action itself.

Miras, at the first impulse of his resentment, clapped his hand upon his pistol, but whether from the fear of missing his aim, or from an excessive respect towards his mistress, he did not venture further in an engagement, for which, by the bye, he felt no great inclination. I pitied his awkward situation, and felt much disposed to take up his quarrel, thinking that this swaggerer was but a braggadocio. I reflected, however, that I might find myself mistaken; and seeing that the party most interested was not very forward in resenting the affront, I was wise enough to refrain from taking up his cudgels. All that I could do for him was, to request him to come to my side, and yield my place to him, which offer he accepted willingly, quite indifferent as to Lucia's opinion of his courage in being obliged thus to quit his post. Our blustering companion called himself Don Lucio de Ribera. He had been informed that the beautiful widow had slept at the monastery the preceding night, and intended to return this day. Accordingly he rode from the city to meet her, and offer his services to escort her home.

No sooner did this fellow perceive that Don Antonio had resigned his post, instead of thinking

of maintaining it, than he took immediate possession of it himself, and prepared to converse with the lady, who, however, deceived his expectation; for, to mortify him, she answered not a word to all he had to say. She deigned not even to look at him, keeping her eyes and attention fixed on Miras and me. In this manner we arrived at Saragossa, and conducted Donna Lucia to her house, where she thanked me most politely for my attentions, adding, that she hoped that the city had sufficient charms to detain me some time. She observed but little ceremony towards the other two gentlemen, acknowledging their civility with a slight bow only. I took no notice of the haughty Don Lucio in parting, but paid a thousand compliments to Don Antonio, which so much pleased him, that he insisted on accompanying me to the Angel, a famous inn at the entrance of the town, and whither I had desired my luggage to be conveyed. Here Miras took his leave of me, in terms which convinced me that, so far from suspecting me for a rival, he believed me to be one of his best friends.

I found my servant and muleteer at the inn, where they had engaged a very commodious apartment for me, in which I supped alone. The landlord, who was one of those inveterate jesters who abound with witticisms and puns, joined me soon after, thinking I should be vastly entertained with his company. He began the conversation by telling me all that was going on in the town, the privileges of which he much extolled, not forgetting to praise the spirit with which the inhabitants maintained those privileges.

I was not averse to listening to him, for, in the midst of a thousand impertinences, a most excellent stroke of wit would occasionally escape him, as is often the case with babblers like him. When I had finished my supper, however, he ceased worrying me any longer with his nonsense, made his bow, and was about to retire.

"Stop, friend," said I, "be kind enough to desire a tailor to call upon me to-morrow morning; I have some work to give him." The entrusting mine host with this commission furnished him with a new topic for conversation, and he took occasion to enlarge upon the knavery of tailors in general, abusing them as other people usually do. Nevertheless, after having railed at them most vehemently as a body, he finished by assuring me that he knew one who knew how to behave himself to his customers, without cabbaging an inch of their cloth, and who, he doubted not, would please me.

He was as good as his word, for as soon as I was up the next morning he introduced a tailor, who appeared to be by no means extravagant, and who understood his business well. I gave orders for a Spanish habit, in the fashion I wished it to be made, and he promised he would send it home in three days, made in so fashionable a style as could not fail to attract the admiration of every one. In the meantime I wore the Italian suit I had purchased at Florence, in which I cut a tolerable good figure on the Corso, which is the place of resort for all the fashionables at Saragossa, and where I was at least not ashamed to appear as one of Donna Lucia's suitors; but as soon as I made my appearance

amongst them in my new dress, I completely eclipsed them all, not only from its elegance, but from the fine jewels with which I thought proper to deck myself out. I was soon looked upon as the favoured lover of the lady, whose attention I certainly attracted; for, whether I accompanied her in her walks, or chanced to pass under her balcony, she evidently distinguished me in preference to all my rivals. The haughty Don Lucio could not conceal his envy of my happiness, and darted the most furious looks at me. With the others I lived on tolerably good terms, especially with Miras, who scarcely ever left me, and procured me all the pleasure he could, by introducing me into the most distinguished families in the city.

Thus I found myself esteemed and honoured at Saragossa, where I was as much in Lucia's favour as I had been in that of my Florence widow, when one morning my servant announced to me that there was a gentleman at my chamber-door who wanted to speak to me. Being still in bed, and thinking that it must be one of Don Antonio's friends, I desired that he might be admitted, and was not a little surprised at sight of the person who had thus announced himself, who was a huge ugly-looking fellow whom I had never seen before. He wore mustachios turned up, a high-crowned hat which nearly reached the ceiling, and a very long sword, the hilt of which he was very careful in holding up, that it might not dangle on the floor; thus, shrugging up his shoulders, he walked with so heavy a foot that the chamber shook at every step he took.

You will naturally expect that after so grand an

entrance he would address himself to me in a corresponding style. But no such thing; he was content to strut up and down my chamber, eyeing me from time to time in a most threatening manner. I soon grew tired of this dumb scene, so that jumping up on a sudden, I seized my pistols, and demanded what business he had there. This action seemed to bring him to his senses. "Do you know," said he with an agitated voice, "the brave Don Lucio de Ribera, the flower and boast of Arragon?" I replied, "that I knew him merely by sight, and that it was but of little consequence whether I knew him or not." "I am come," continued he, presenting me a letter, "to find you on his behalf. This letter will explain the rest." I took the note very calmly, for I perceived plainly that the bearer was more frightened than myself, and having opened it, read these words:—"Be you an Italian or a Spaniard, your presumption is unpardonable in coming into this country to dispute our ladies' hearts with us; but as you appear to be a foreigner, we are willing to excuse your extreme rashness, on condition that you leave Saragossa within four and twenty hours. Should your evil genius induce you to despise our resentment, be prepared to encounter Don Lucio de Ribera, whom no one has hitherto been able to vanquish, but whom you must overcome before you can offer any pretensions to Donna Lucia."

Knowing the letter before I opened it to be from Don Lucio, I guessed that it must be a challenge, or something approaching it; so that I was not in the least astonished at its contents. "Sir," said I to the messenger, "tell your employer on this occasion that,

*de da cunia de su propio meru.
L. no tiene-antagonista -*

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whether Italian or Spaniard, I have two daggers very much at his service, and that I am ready to fight him in my shirt, to prevent the possibility of foul play. No coats of mail for me, the really brave never make use of them in single combat. Let Don Lucio agree to these articles, and he shall find that I am ready to brave any danger to deserve the heart of Lucia. This is my answer."—"Give it me in writing," replied the bearer of the letter, "that the regular Don Lucio may be convinced of my having delivered his message like a man of honour." To satisfy this valiant messenger, I took the trouble of committing to paper the same words that I had just told him aloud, and he left me, promising to return in the afternoon to fix the hour and the spot on which we should fight. After this rascal had left the room, I congratulated myself exceedingly that I had acquitted myself so manfully on this occasion; for, though I had not the slightest inclination to fight, it was not the less necessary to assume the bravo, which has got many a man out of a scrape in similar cases, and which, indeed, was the only way in which I could receive so boisterous a gentleman. Let the worst come to the worst however, thought I, my mules being always ready, I can at any time make a retreat. It is true that the idea of leaving Lucia would have caused me some pain, but I was not yet so much in love with her as to hesitate between the possession of her and the preservation of my own sweet person.

Still this affair caused me no inconsiderable anxiety, and I was most intently musing upon it, when mine host entered the room without my perceiving him

to ask whether I was ready for dinner, and seeing me look into my pocket handkerchief after having made use of it, roared out most lustily, "Take care of yourself, sir, or you are undone!" I shuddered at these words, for my head was so full of the last scene, that I thought nothing less than that Don Lucio was on his way upstairs with the intention of assassinating me; but seeing my landlord laugh at my alarm, I recovered myself a little, and gave him to understand that I did not much admire such jokes; this only caused him to laugh the more at my expense. "How came you, then," said he, "to look into your handkerchief after having blown your nose? Know you not that you have thereby incurred a penalty for having broken the laws established against such ridiculous customs?" Knowing the fellow to be an original who meant no offence, I joined him in the laugh, and asked what the forfeit was. "No stipulated sum," replied he, "but I daresay I can let you off for a real." This I paid most willingly, though I would rather have paid twenty times the sum to have dispensed with the fright he had caused me. "In return for this," continued he, "I receive you from this moment as one of our fraternity, and promise to give you a license, by virtue of which you may in future commit the like fooleries at your pleasure; and since your real has produced you the honour of a place amongst us, it is but fair that I should amuse you after dinner by the perusal of the list of such habits as will entitle any one to a place in our brotherhood."

No sooner had I dined than he entered the room again, with a long tablet carefully sealed with yellow

wax, containing the names of the elders and governors of the fraternity. The following pages contained all the fooleries that would entitle a person to be admitted into Fool's College. I shall quote five or six of these instances, which will suffice to give you an idea of the rest. Preamble: We declare quite worthy to be admitted into our College all those who may be addicted to the following habits—

1st. He who talks to himself either in his room or in the street.

2nd. He who in playing at bowls runs after his own bowl with divers contortions, hoping to make it roll to the exact spot he wishes.

3rd. All those who take up their cards one by one, thinking by that means to ensure themselves all the court cards in the pack.

4th. Those who inquire the hour of the day while the clock is striking exactly before them.

5th. Those who, having sent a servant on an errand, plant themselves at the window, thinking thereby to hasten his return.

6th. All those who after having blown their noses examine their handkerchiefs most attentively, as though they expected to find pearls in them, &c., &c., &c.

I amused myself a great part of the afternoon in reading this budget of extravagances, expecting every moment to hear again from Don Lucio, and was just growing weary of staying so long within doors when Don Antonio and some friends of his called upon me. They began by telling me that they were come to offer me their services in the affair of honour that I had on hand, adding that the whole town

knew that Don Lucio had sent me a challenge, and that duelling being prohibited, that Cavalier was already arrested. From this circumstance it was pretty clear to me that Don Antonio and his friends were of that description of persons who are ever most eager to proffer their assistance, when they know that all danger is over. I accordingly related, as much to my own advantage as possible, the full particulars of what had passed that morning between me and Don Lucio's messenger; upon which Don Antonio represented to me that I might also be arrested, and invited me to retire to his house. This I did not fail to accede to, for I dreaded anything like imprisonment for more reasons than one. I passed the remainder of the day at that gentleman's house, but, not intending to sleep there, I left him about ten o'clock at night to return to my inn.

On my way home I met two ladies, attended by a footman who carried a large lantern, by the light of which I soon distinguished that they were extremely handsome. I therefore accosted them in the most polite manner, and they answered my civilities with considerable vivacity; and, judging from my appearance and dress that I should be an easy prey, they ogled me in such a manner that I could not resist accompanying them farther than I intended; but having come to the corner of a street, they stopped all of a sudden, and one of them said: "Come no farther, I beg, sir; we are only going to visit a sick lady who resides a few doors up this street. If you have time to wait, we shall be walking home again in about a quarter of an hour, and you may not repent of having met us. You shall

hear a song, and the lute played to admiration." Thus saying, they escaped from me, leaving me so fully persuaded they would keep their promise, that I was fool enough to wait in the street until near midnight. By that time, however, I was but too well convinced that I had been duped, sharp and cunning as I thought myself; and must further confess, to my confusion, that I had not even saved my purse from the dexterity of these accomplished damsels.

Being obliged, on my way to my lodging, to pass the house of my fair widow, I could not refuse myself the pleasure of gazing on it for some time, and I fancied that I perceived a man at the door. I imagined at first that this must be Don Lucio, knowing that he was in the habit of stationing himself near that spot every night, and this thought was accompanied by an emotion mingled with fear and jealousy. Recollecting, however, that he was in prison, I reflected that it could not be him; I grew confident, and, incited by jealousy, advanced towards the object that created it, and who, apparently more afraid than myself, disappeared at my approach. Having reached the door, I heard the deafened creakings of a bolt, whence I concluded that some one was opening it as quietly as possible. I was not mistaken in my conjecture, for in a moment after the door was half opened, so as to admit a man. Curiosity to know the bottom of this affair, in which I believed myself to be more interested than I really was, prompted me to slip in as quietly as possible. I immediately felt a hand held out to conduct me, for there was not a glimpse of light in the passage.

I thought from the first that the person mistook me, and could no longer doubt it when, being led into a back parlour, I was rather roughly regaled with a most fervent embrace, seasoned with the fragrant and delightful smell of pepper, garlic and saffron, which convinced me that this transported lover, who was so profuse of her favours, could be no other than the cook. In the midst of her transports, however, she began to suspect, from touching my clothes and face, that I could not be the favoured swain whom she expected; and at length, being convinced of her mistake, she suddenly let go her hold of me, and thought to escape; but I held her fast by the petticoat. She exerted all her strength to disengage herself, and I was as determined to detain her, until at length we both fell down with a tremendous crash. This noise awoke two footmen, who lay in an adjoining closet. They jumped instantly out of bed, thinking they heard thieves, and each arming himself with a sword, crept softly with a lamp into the parlour, where they found us stretched at our length on the floor.

They recognised me immediately, and, surprised to see a gentleman who aspired to the hand of their mistress contending with so much violence for the good graces of a kitchen wench, who had never even tempted themselves, they burst into an immoderate fit of laughter, to my utter confusion. The insolence of the creature herself was surprising; she accused me of a deliberate design to violate her honour, and asserted that I had secreted myself in the house with that view. Without waiting to justify myself, I picked up my hat, which had been knocked off my

head by a violent box on the ears, and addressing myself to the servant who carried the lamp, desired him to light me to the street door, which he did, grinning all the way in such a manner that I was almost tempted to knock him down. I soon reached my inn, cruelly mortified at so disgraceful and pitiful an adventure, not doubting that the story would be all over the town the next day, and that I should be the common talk of all the inhabitants. This idea, which afflicted me more than you can possibly imagine, made me resolve to stay no longer in Saragossa than was absolutely necessary to make preparations for my departure. My equipage was ready, therefore, at break of day, and my mules, as though they partook of their master's impatience to leave a place where he could not again make his appearance without shame, commenced their journey with a speed and seeming anxiety which pleased me exceedingly.

CHAPTER XLVII.

GUZMAN DEPARTS FOR MADRID, WHERE HE ENGAGES IN A NEW GALLANTRY, THE CONCLUSION OF WHICH DOES NOT PROVE SO AGREEABLE AS THE COMMENCEMENT.

I TOOK the road to Madrid, and six days after my departure from Saragossa I arrived at Alcala de Henares, a town the situation of which is delightful, and which the beauty of its buildings renders comparable with the most flourishing capitols in the world. In addition to this, the *belles lettres* were

cultivated there to perfection. I should certainly have taken up my abode there, had I not been foolishly desirous to visit St. James's once more, where I had formerly acted so miserable a part.

I stopped but eight days at Alcala, and then proceeded towards Madrid. That celebrated city saw arrive, with three mules in his train, two of which were laden with valuable property, that same Guzman who had formerly carried a basket in its marketplace. I hesitated for some time as to where I should take up my lodging; but recollecting that in my time the best inn was in Toledo Street, I determined to alight there. I found it strangely changed. The landlord was dead, and his widow, though a shrewd active woman, who had more than one string to her bow, could not support its reputation on the same footing. It was certainly much fallen off; but the extreme civility with which they treated me, whom they looked upon as a rich young nobleman, prevented me from leaving them.

My next care was to make special inquiries about my old friend the three-bagged apothecary; and though I did not much fear that I could be recognised, I must confess that I felt a secret joy when I learnt that he had taken his departure for that country whither his drugs had despatched so many of his patients before him. Ten years, however, had now elapsed since I left Madrid, and, besides that, I was much altered in person; who the devil could have recognised poor Guzman in the finery with which he was now disguised? I took great pleasure in showing myself off in my best suits, particularly in the one I had purchased at Saragossa. I exhibited

myself in them by turns, in the morning at the different churches, and in the evening at the Prado.

One night having returned home rather late to bed, as I crossed a corridor which led to my chamber I heard the voice of a young lady accompanying a harp. I stopped to listen to this little concert, for it was very near my own room, and felt an extreme curiosity to know who were the fair performers. My landlady, who was going to send some sweetmeats and biscuits to refresh the singer, happened to pass by just at this moment, and told me that they were two ladies of Guadalaxara, who were but just arrived at her house, to solicit a lawsuit at Madrid for a large sum of money. I gave her to understand that I had an extreme desire to hear them nearer, and that she would confer an obligation on me which I should remember all my life if she could procure me admittance into their company. She replied that she would do all she could in my favour, but that she dared not promise me, for the mother was a very reserved sort of woman, who led a very retired life with her daughter, who was very pretty, and whom she never trusted out of her sight. This only made me the more anxious to see her. My landlady assured me that she would do all in her power. With this assurance, I allowed her to enter the apartment where the ladies were, and I walked up and down the corridor, expecting their answer, which was, that the ladies hoped I would excuse their declining at so late an hour to receive a visit from a gentleman with whom they were not acquainted.

I pretended to be very much afflicted at this re-

fusal, which, upon the whole, vexed me indeed ; so that my good landlady, who appeared on her side as much concerned as I was, went into the ladies' apartment to try again what could be done, and at last she returned to let me know that the ladies consented to grant me an interview, on condition that I would only stay a quarter of an hour with them. I desired no more, sure that once admitted the condition as to time would not be strictly observed. I presented myself, then, with the air of a man of quality, first to the mother, whom I saluted with great respect, then to the daughter, and they both received me as it became persons who knew the world. They were both so neatly dressed, considering they were just come off a journey, that I was quite astonished. The mother appeared to me very handsome, though there was in her looks something bold and shy. As for the daughter, she had a soft and expressive countenance, and appeared to me a young lady about seventeen or eighteen years old. I remarked in their room two large silver candlesticks on a table, and two toilets elegantly set out. I saw also three large travelling trunks, and a lackey in a very rich livery attended them with the most profound respect. I had not the least doubt, therefore, that they must be of one of the first families of Guadalajara, so that I began my compliments by apologising for the liberty I had taken, and, the better to justify my impatience, added that I had been so enchanted with their concert, that I could not resist the desire of expressing my satisfaction. The mother replied to my compliment with much wit and modesty.

Our conversation naturally ran upon music, and I soon let them see clearly enough that I understood that science; then, entreating them to renew their concert, I even offered to sing with them.

The ladies, curious to hear me, agreed to it; so the mother took up the harp, and the young lady began to sing an air I knew. I endeavoured to display the full power of my voice, and it produced the same effect here as at Florence, or at the abbey near Saragossa, and the ladies seemed transported with pleasure; they forgot the condition of a quarter of an hour, for it had already struck twelve, and none of us thought of retiring. The mother, however, as decency required she should give me notice of it, at length did it in the most obliging manner, adding how happy they should be to pass some more agreeable moments with me during their stay at Madrid. I then took my leave, and let the young lady see by my looks that I was not insensible to her charms; and, indeed, it was more true than I thought, for during all the night sleep did not close my eyelids.

The next morning my hostess, who usually drank a dish of chocolate every day with me, came into my room smiling, and said: "I have just left the apartment of your fair neighbours, and you cannot conceive how much pleased they are with you. Besides that they find your person altogether pleasing, they are also delighted with your agreeable and cheerful conversation, and if you are inclined to carry it on, I have not the least doubt of your success; the mother and daughter are equally pleased with you." I swallowed these sweet words as if they had been honey, and, pleased to have in so short a time made

so lively an impression, I answered that I was equally satisfied with them; that the mother appeared to me to be still very attractive, but as for the daughter, no woman was to be compared with her, and I was willing to undertake her conquest, if any well-disposed person would help me in the attempt. "I understand you," replied the hostess; "you wish me to render you that service. I have no objection; but how shall we begin the business?"—"I will this evening," said I, "prevail on the ladies to take a walk, and order an elegant repast for them in some house."—"Not for the world!" cried out my hostess; "that would affront the mother, who would soon see into your design, and break off your acquaintance altogether. Let us do something better," continued she, after having paused a little; "this entertainment must be given in my name. I will have the collation prepared according to your desire, in a garden that I have on the banks of the Mançanares, where I will invite the ladies to pass the evening; you will come and surprise us, as if chance only had brought you thither, and we shall be more to ourselves in that place than in any other." I approved of the idea, and my hostess took upon herself the charge of inviting the mother to the entertainment.

My confidante went immediately to make the proposal to the ladies, with whom she remained nearly an hour, by which I judged that she had trouble enough to persuade them to accept of it; and, indeed, when she returned she told me that the mother had been very hard to be prevailed upon, and that she had for a long time despaired of inducing her to accept my invitation. "All that I require of you is to be-

have so that nothing appear to have been concerted between us. When you come to the garden, pretend to be astonished to meet us there. In a word, let your coming seem purely accidental." I answered that she might be sure I would spoil nothing, and we then agreed how things should be managed to render the entertainment as agreeable as possible.

We succeeded. The entertainment was like that of a young lover who was desirous to please, and the guests received it as if ignorant of any bad motive. We were extremely well amused. As the mother had not her harp with her, her daughter and I were obliged to sing without music, sometimes together, and sometimes alternately, exchanging slyly the most tender looks—mine with the view of expressing my passion, and hers to increase it. Night insensibly surprised us in the garden, and whilst the hostess, out of complacency for me, held the mother in conversation, I courted the daughter, who did not seem to listen with indifference to my impassioned declaration; at last, being obliged to return to town, I waited on the ladies to their lodgings, where, as a special favour, they granted me half-an-hour's conversation, after which I took my leave, as much in love, as I thought, with my new mistress as I had been with any other before.

The next day I sent the young lady a most pathetic billet-doux by my hostess, but she returned no answer. To have received it, however, unknown to her mother, was a favour of itself. I wrote another, which I gently put into her own hand in the evening when the ladies were again treated at my expense.

This time I had an answer ; very short indeed, for there were but two lines, of no real import, but in which I fancied I discovered an infinite deal of wit. Thus they made me dispute every inch of ground to increase my desires, or, to tell the truth, all the parts were so well acted in this intrigue, by my good hostess, that she knew how to manage each party to her own advantage, just as she pleased. However, I became every day more and more intimate with my fair neighbour. I scarcely ever stirred out of the house, so charmed was I with her company. The mother often went out, as she said, to make interest respecting her lawsuit, and when that happened, my officious confidante gave me notice of it, and without ceremony would conduct me to the daughter, with whom I stayed while she was at her toilet ; and lest the facility of enjoying such favourable opportunities should lessen the charms of them, she would every now and then disturb us by false alarms of the mother's return.

When my landlady thought I was completely in love, she proposed to me to marry Donna Helena de Melida, which was the young lady's name. This proposal put me upon my guard against my worthy hostess, and I now began to see into the plot which had been laid against me. She had hitherto represented the lady to be too rich, and of too high a rank for me to encourage any hope that she would consent to give her hand to an adventurer. My landlady from this time became suspected by me, and to rid myself at once of her importunities, I told her in plain terms that I was engaged in another quarter. No sooner had I expressed myself in this manner, than the ladies changed their batteries. Hitherto they had

constantly refused the presents I had ventured to send them by mine hostess; but they now adopted a plan entirely different, resolving to fleece the bird while they had it in their power, and they did in reality pluck many good feathers out of my plumage. In proportion, however, as I acted with generosity towards her, the less my fair Helena became reserved; so that after several familiar and interesting *tête-à-têtes*, my passion began to subside, and from that time nothing else passed between us but an interchange of civility and politeness.

A new incident completed my cure. One morning I saw coming out of the Dominican's Church a lady of a majestic deportment and richly dressed, whom I took for a woman of quality; and as she passed near me, though I dared not bow to her, I showed her so much respect, that she took notice of it, and viewed me with so much attention that I thought myself highly honoured—in Spain even the look that a lady bestows on a man being considered a favour. My curiosity induced me to inquire who she was, and I accordingly followed her. She observed me, but walked on at a slow pace. She was followed by two duennas and a valet, which confirmed me in the opinion that I had of her being a lady of quality. When she was in the middle of the broad street, she stopped before a magnificent house and went in. I had not the least doubt that she lived there, and after some inquiries I learnt that she was the daughter of Signor Don Andrea, who assumed the title of Don in quality of the Court Banker, and that this young lady had the reputation of being very virtuous.

MATEO ALEMAN.

I could not get this adventure out of my head the whole of the morning; towards evening I walked up and down before the banker's window again, and my trouble was not lost. I had a full view of the banker, who was conversing with his daughter on a balcony, who appeared to be a very personable man. As for the lady I cannot say that she was a perfect beauty, but she had an agreeable air and easy manners, which pleased me extremely, and prepossessed me in favour of her mind. If I had been charmed in the morning, how much more so was I in the evening. I returned home quite in love with her, and resolved to get acquainted with her the very next day, which I accomplished. I am about to relate to you. Since my arrival in Madrid I had the precaution to have my diamonds all new set, for fear my relations should give advice to their correspondents, and cause me to be arrested. I had even run a great

risk in showing them to the jeweller. I carried these to the amount of ten or twelve thousand francs to the banker, telling him at the same time, that I had others at home of more considerable value. He looked at them with an eager eye, valued them at twelve thousand francs, and offered to pay me that sum in six months, if I would allow him to sell them for me.

As I had no other intention but to begin a train of business with him, I accepted his offer, and even refused his note of hand for the value of the jewels, telling him that I knew too well what reputation he had in the world to require of him any other security than his own word. We then agreed that he should pay me in three months six thousand francs, and the other six thousand in three months after. My way

of dealing charmed him so much, that he thanked me for the confidence I placed in him, and made me many protestations of service. He then showed me all over his house, which was richly furnished. I observed equipages for him and his daughter, with a great number of servants. All these objects dazzled my eyes so much, that I was easily inclined to look upon him as one of the richest bankers in Spain.

If all that was offered to my sight tended to confirm me in this opinion, his discourse was still more calculated to mislead me. He told me that he transacted business to the amount of two or three millions of francs every day; that the court always made use of him and of his purse, to remit considerable sums to foreign countries; that he had access to the ministers when he pleased; that the greatest lords were his friends, and that there were but few of them who had not dealings with him.

This statement was not altogether without foundation. He had formerly lived upon such a footing with the great; but by dealing with, and trusting those great men rather too extensively, he had run himself so far in debt, that he only supported himself by his wits, which were such, at any rate, that he kept up his credit. My jewels were a great help to him in his embarrassment; for he was just at this time extremely straightened for a considerable sum of money, and raised half by them—having seized the opportunity of the marriage of the Duke of Medina Sidonia's daughter to dispose of them advantageously. As I could then only judge of his circumstances by appearances, I considered myself very happy in having made an acquaintance with

him, and even secretly blamed myself for having conceived so bold an idea as that of aspiring to the hand of his only daughter, who appeared to be a match worthy of a prince.

Don Andrea, on his side, was not without surprise at my mode of proceeding. He therefore sent a trusty person to inquire my character from my landlady, and in what style I was living at Madrid. From all sides, however, he obtained favourable reports of me; for though no one was acquainted with my family, I might easily pass for a man of quality, as far as my mode of living, manners, and conversation, would impress such a belief. After such good accounts of me, he concluded that I was the man Heaven had intended for his son-in-law. He mentioned it to his daughter, who told him that I had followed her from the Dominican's Church to her house; that I continually passed under the windows; in a word, that by all my actions I had given her to understand that I had conceived a passion for her. The father had too much experience not to believe the same thing, and the confidence I had placed in him, by giving him my diamonds without a note, could only be the effect of my love for his daughter. They both rejoiced at it in their private conversations, and, concluding that I was richer than a Jew, they resolved to manage it so well as not to miss so fair an opportunity of advancing themselves again in the world.

Accordingly, the banker came to visit me at the hotel. I expected him, and I took care to set out in my room all my jewels, which had a great effect upon him. He was especially struck with my gold chain, the workmanship of which he praised much, and

offered to sell it for me at a third more than it cost ; I took him at his word, and let him have it, as I had done with the diamonds, without a note. His joy was extreme ; he made me a thousand protestations of friendship, and, beginning already to act the part of a father-in-law, gave me advice how to put out my ready money to the best advantage. A few days after, he brought me the sum he had promised me for my gold chain. This increased the confidence I had placed in him, and induced me to acknowledge his trouble by a present suitable for a young lady, which I sent to his daughter, after he had granted me leave to do so. This present having been received favourably, made me bold enough to discover my passion after the custom of the country, that is to say, by signs and looks, and it seemed she did not disapprove of it.

As for the father, whom I saw every day, I talked with him of nothing else but trade and business, waiting for the first good opportunity to declare my sentiments. This new amour cooled me very much with respect to my last intrigue. My neighbours perceived but too well the alteration, for there was an end to feasts and presents. I seldom stopped at home, and when I returned in the evening I went directly to bed, or when I could not avoid the conversation of the ladies, it was so cold, that they soon guessed I had shaken off their yoke. Helena, finding that her kindness to me, far from increasing my ardour, had diminished it, shed tears out of spite. She held a grand consultation with her mother and the hostess on my change, which they did not fail to attribute to some new intrigue ; they resolved to try my generosity, and if they had no occasion to be satisfied with me,

to have recourse to some of their tricks to be avenged for my inconstancy. An opportunity soon offered for the execution of their design. Two young lords, who had plenty of ready money, came to live at the hotel; they asked me to play with them, and at two or three sittings I won two hundred and fifty pistoles off them. The ladies were no sooner informed of this, than they prevailed upon me to take a walk with them, which I could not refuse, and in coming back we passed before a shop where they sold silks and gold stuffs. Our landlady, who was with us, was very anxious that I should go in and buy a new gown for Donna Helena, saying that I had won enough to make her that little present. I suffered the hostess to talk as much as she pleased, and, laughing at her entreaties, I baffled the expectation of the ladies, who fully expected to have completely drained my purse. This last action sufficiently convinced them that I was no longer in their snares.

I wanted my money for a better use, for in my rambles about the town I had seen a house newly built. I asked Don Andrea's advice, and he approved of it, and even managed it so that I made a very good bargain. It cost me only three thousand ducats, which I paid down before him with as much *sangfroid* as if I had a hundred thousand crowns in my coffers. You may imagine what an effect it had on my future father-in-law, who, though a man of rather keen understanding, had not the least doubt that he had met with a good son-in-law, and that it remained only for him to allure me cunningly into the snare. I furnished my house elegantly, and prepared to occupy it. The day that I intended to sleep in it, thinking

that I could not, without rudeness, dispense with taking the last farewell of my neighbours, I paid them a visit accordingly, and paid them many compliments, which they received with much politeness, and so much good humour, that I was quite surprised; then addressing the hostess, I thanked her for all the attention she had shown me, which I told her I should remember to the last moment of my life. She answered all my civilities in the most flattering manner, and very obligingly requested the honour of my company to dine with her before my departure. As I knew her to be a woman of very indifferent character, and wished to part amicably, I readily agreed to her request.

I accordingly dined with my hostess, who had provided for me three dishes which she knew I was very fond of; but she kept me for a fourth, which was not at all to my liking. This was brought to me in the persons of an Alguazil and six of his followers, who entered the room with a warrant to apprehend me. At this sight I was thrown into such confusion that I had not the least doubt I was ruined. All my relations presented themselves to my remembrance, for I expected every moment some persons employed by them would find me out, not so much as dreaming that any other person in Madrid could have any cause of action against me. I rose from the table in a dreadful disorder; I knew not what to do; I attempted the door, but was stopped by three of the fellows; then I went to the window in order to escape that way, but here the three others prevented me. The Alguazil, who was one of the most rational of the brotherhood, observing the confusion I was in, came

up to me smiling, and gently said to me: "Signor Cavalier, cheer up, there is no need of being so much alarmed; this business is but a trifle, and you will clear yourself for a few pistoles. Look," said he again, giving me the warrant, "read, and you will see that you have taken alarm without cause." These words, which appeared to me to come from a fellow who, well informed of my tricks, only amused himself by bantering me, did not much lessen my fear. I sat down, however, and running over the warrant in as collected a manner as I was able, I read the name of Donna Helena de Melida; I then took breath a little, and turning to the Alguazil: "What does it mean?" said I. "What! is it in the name of that lady I am arrested? what have I done to her?"—"She pretends," answered he, smiling, "that you have obtained by force what her virtue had first refused to your desires."

"What do I hear?" cried I, quite surprised. "Has Helena impudence enough to affirm that I am guilty of such a crime?"—"Why not?" replied the Alguazil; "she may have some design in accusing you of it. True she will be obliged to prove it, and you will be allowed to defend yourself, but what is the most disagreeable part of it," added he, "is, that by the duty of my function I must carry you to prison." By this time I had recollected myself, and I read the warrant over again; and after considering what I should do, I rose and took the Alguazil aside: "Sir," said I, "I believe you to be a man of honour; consider, I pray, the unjust persecution I am suffering. I declare to you that, far from having used violent means to attain my happiness, the fair Helena has

not been backward in promoting it; if you knew how much money I have spent"—"I have not the least doubt of it," said he; "I know this wench of old, as well as the roguish tricks of her mother. They have both lived here at Madrid these ten years, where they have no other trade but to ensnare young foreigners. You are the third they have served the very same trick you complain of, and, between ourselves, I believe you will not be able to get clear without a sum of money."—"I think as you do," said I; "there can be no other means to hush it up quickly, and without noise. I entrust you," I added, slipping privately a diamond ring, worth twelve or fifteen pistoles, into his hand, "to accommodate matters." He put the ring on his finger, and, with the tone of an Alguazil, he answered: "I will go and see the ladies, and if they refuse to desist in their action against you, I will threaten them with keeping an eye over their conduct, which will not fail to make them listen to reason."

After these words he left me in the room with his men, who, dazzling my eyes with the points of their spikes, kept me in awe till his return. If the hostess, who, I had good reason to suspect, had been the inventor of this piece of roguery, had been present then, I should have eased my mind by calling her all the names she deserved; but to avoid my reproaches, she had taken flight at the sight of the bloodhounds of justice. I was not altogether without uneasiness about the conferences held in the apartments of my adversaries. I could not place sufficient confidence in the fidelity of my agent to believe him more in my interest than in that of the ladies. However, he

acted fairly on the occasion, obliging them to be contented with an hundred pistoles, of which he had twenty for his own share. I thanked my stars that I had got off so cheaply; I left the inn, never to return to it, and repaired to my own house, very happy that the adventure had been hushed up with so little noise.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

GUZMAN PAYS HIS ADDRESSES TO THE BANKER'S DAUGHTER, AND MARRIES HER—CONSEQUENCES OF THIS MARRIAGE.

As soon as I had got rid of Helena, her mother and the hostess, I devoted myself entirely to my new amour, and thought of nothing else but to become the son-in-law of Don Andrea, who, on his side, fearing that I should embark in some new intrigue, had no less impatience to give me his daughter than I to obtain her. I went the very next day to the banker's house, who kept me to dinner, towards the end of which my intended bride appeared, as if by chance; I rose immediately to pay my respects to her, and express the agreeable surprise her presence excited in me. She returned my compliments with a modest air, and would have retired, but her father prevented her. "Eugenia," said he to her, "stay with us; this gentleman is my friend, and I am happy to let him have a proof of it by giving you leave to converse with him." I did not fail to thank him for so great a favour, with which I was quite delighted, and more so indeed than I really appeared to be.

I then entered into conversation with Eugenia, and to increase my joy, Don Andrea, under pretence of writing some letters, retired to a corner of the drawing-room, to leave us more to ourselves.

If he acted in this manner to afford me the opportunity of a delightful conversation, he did not favour a fool, for I availed myself of this interview, not knowing when I should have a more favourable one, to declare my passion. I called forth all my genius, which served me well enough on the occasion, and the lady enchanted me by the delicacy of her replies. In the meantime the father, still pretending to be very busy, now and then asked pardon for being no better company; I returned him compliment for compliment, and, following my point, still courted the daughter in a low voice, as if afraid of disturbing him in his reading. We had been three hours together, when the banker, thinking proper to put an end to our conversation, came and joined us, and Eugenia, after having made a curtesy, disappeared.

I now felt so much esteem, or rather was so much in love with this lady, that I could not forbear breaking out in praise of her; and speaking from the fullness of my heart, I told Don Andrea, that no one could possibly be more sensible of his daughter's merit than I was. The old fox listened to me very attentively, and to encourage me to explain myself more clearly, he held a long discourse on the necessity of persons of my age marrying, to avoid an infinite number of precipices to which they are daily exposed, and on the importance of the choice of a wife, since it commonly decided the happiness or misery of her husband. He then proceeded to assure me

of the good opinion he had conceived of me, telling me that I had won his heart by my ingenious manners and the confidence I had placed in him; and that I might rely that there was nothing that lay in his power which he would not do to convince me of it. I was not much behind hand with him in professions. I opened my whole heart to him, and protested that he might make me the happiest of men in giving me Eugenia. He considered for some time, or appeared to do so, to persuade me that I set his friendship at too great a trial; however, before we parted, I knew what I had to expect. He embraced me tenderly when I left him, and told me he had certain views of establishing his daughter more advantageously, but that he had given them all up to show me how dear I was to him. At these words, I took one of his hands, and kissed it with a transport that proved more fully than all I could have said the gratitude of my heart.

From this time the banker called me his son. He managed all my affairs; the six thousand francs which he had engaged to pay me in three months, he now advanced immediately, to assist me in furnishing my house, and he bought for me, at a cheap rate, several elegant pieces of furniture, which a person in want of money was obliged to sell. In a word, I dined every day with my future father-in-law. I saw his daughter every day, and enjoyed all the privileges of a son-in-law; except that one only, which the title of a husband could give a right to. One thing alone surprised me, which was, that in all the conversations I had as yet had with Don Andrea, he had never uttered a word about any portion. I attempted to sound him on this subject, but he gave me to under-

stand that his intention was not to part with much ready money on the wedding-day. "You will receive only ten thousand francs down," said he, "but you may rely on the sum of fifty thousand after my death." I thought ten thousand francs but a paltry portion for the daughter of a man whom I had thought so rich; nevertheless, considering that tradesmen do not like to lessen their capitals, I was obliged to be contented.

I now earnestly entreated Don Andrea not to let me languish in the expectation of being in reality his son-in-law. He yielded to my solicitations, and our nuptials were celebrated with great pomp. My father-in-law paid me the ten thousand francs, as had been agreed, and I soon found employment for them. I made my bride a present of all the jewels I had left, bought her most superb dresses, kept up incessant rejoicings in my new house for the first fortnight, provided women and footmen to attend her; in a word, I set up a way of living which would soon have ruined me, had I not by my own industry supplied the means to meet this increased expenditure. The banker, it is true, promised mountains of gold, if fortune would but smile on his speculations. He was a man of vast designs and projects, and his son-in-law being something of the same turn of mind, we thought of no less than monopolising in a very short time the whole business of the kingdom. Unluckily, however, for the success of our enterprises, his sole reliance was on my purse, and mine on his; and the illusion soon vanished, when we found ourselves obliged to communicate the state of our affairs to each other. The eyes of both of us were opened without recrimination,

for, in fact, we had nothing to reproach each other with; on the contrary, our mutual confidence had the effect of making our union more close; and being now known to each other for what we really were, like robbers we swore to be faithful.

Our partnership at first made a great noise, owing to the mysterious tone with which Don Andrea told everybody that he had chosen for his son-in-law a man who was possessed of immense riches. It was soon spread about, and every one was for dealing with us, and came to us in preference to other bankers; and we might by our credit only have increased every day the favourable opinion they had of our wealth, if we had been contented to have associated with tradesmen, and no doubt we should have made a considerable fortune; but the uncommon weak partiality that my father-in-law always had for people of the court, put a check to our success. What he received with one hand was squandered with the other. If a marquis, a count, or a knight of San Jago, were civil to him, they were sure to obtain any loan of money, and, knowing his vanity, they would not fail to lavish upon him the most flattering compliments.

If a minister looked favourably on him, the very next day he would send him some rich present to no purpose whatever. He always had his head filled with chimerical projects which he would put in execution, and if I happened to show him the folly of them, he laughed at me, and treated me with contempt, as a man who had not common sense, and was quite a novice in the business of the great world.

However, with all his experience, our best substance was soon spent, our stock grew low, and we were re-

duced to make use of every means to renew and uphold our credit. What engines did we not set to work for that purpose? We bought and sold anything; we received pawns; we lent money at usurious interest; in short, there was no sort of commerce which we were not engaged in. Besides what I knew already, my industry, improved by exercising it, helped me to new expedients for the good of our society. However, I must own that I was but a mere beginner compared to my father-in-law. Our gains were great, and would have been sufficient to have maintained us agreeably; and if we had understood how to live with economy, we should not have been obliged to make use of some sorry shifts, which in spite of all our skill we were sometimes compelled to resort to. In addition to this our domestic expenses were most profuse. If Don Andrea was fond of luxury and good living, his daughter was not behindhand with him; there was nothing too rich or too fine for her; we kept as magnificent a table as any nobleman, more servants than we conveniently wanted, and our house was continually full of relations and friends, whom we entertained and treated with the greatest profusion.

This bustle did not less please my humour than that of my wife, and while our affairs went on well, I did not in the least oppose it. I got tired, however, in two or three years after my marriage, when I perceived that through bad management, and some unforeseen accidents, our fortune began to diminish apace. Frightened at the prospect of distress, I ventured to remonstrate gently with Eugenia; God knows how I was treated by her! I complained to

Don Andrea, who reproved her; and the whole family blamed her for her behaviour; but even my softest words, the reproaches of her father, and the entreaties of her friends, did but exasperate her the more against me: in a word, she declared to me that she did not mean to have the least reform in her family. After this decree, which the temper of my wife made quite absolute, I wisely resolved not to contradict her any more, but endeavour to fortify myself with more patience for the future.

It was, however, with extreme grief that I saw melting away, like snow, all the money I had brought with me from Italy; and I could not think of the consequences of my marriage without sighing bitterly for having been so deprived of sense as to marry at all. Sometimes, to excuse myself for having acted so foolishly, I recalled to mind the rich figure that Don Andrea made when I became his son-in-law; and who could have imagined that I should find my ruin in an establishment that appeared to possess the means of the most solid fortune? When I observed that there was no longer any hope of being able to live on the same footing, I applied to my father-in-law for advice in my embarrassment.

It was on this occasion that he showed me how skilful he was in all the tricks of business. "The truth is," said he, "you must do here what I have done myself in similar cases, which is, to save the little that remains to you at the cost of others:" then without the least delay he counterfeited letters of transfer, and false contracts, and I do not know how many similar deeds, all equally worthy of a public reward, if proper justice could always be administered to all

honest folks that make use of them. He did not stop here ; for in order to establish my credit, which was now become necessary to him, he made me purchase an estate of five hundred ducats a year, which his brother possessed ; when I say purchase, I mean only in appearance, for we were not able, both together, to muster a sufficient sum to show the notary, that he might witness the payment of the purchase-money. It cost me, however, but fifty crowns to borrow this sum for one day, and thus the sale was apparently completed. At the same time I gave the seller a deed, by which I formally declared that the said estate did not belong to me, but was as much his as ever, to whom I abandoned the enjoyment of it, having no manner of claim. I was well pleased with these shuffling tricks, because they were advantageous to me. Besides, I knew that they were commonly practised in all trading cities.

Thanks to my father-in-law, I had now secured something to myself, let fortune be as contrary as it pleased ; and being able to trade again upon the faith of this new estate, I went on in my usual courses. Unfortunately this state of things could not last long. People who have been cheated are sure to be undeceived at last ; besides, my wife's always spending more than I gained, was sufficient of itself to ruin me, and I could not hold out against it any longer. Don Andrea was still lucky enough to get himself out of the scrape. As for me, I could no longer keep out of the clutches of a cursed Alguazil, who arrested me on the part of my creditors, and led me to prison ; but they found themselves overreached when they set about seizing my effects, and learned

that they were secretly made over. I was not so unconscionable as to wish them to lose all; so I paid each a tenth part of what was due, promising to liquidate the remainder in ten years. I was set at liberty again on these terms.

The proud Eugenia was so extremely mortified at my imprisonment and bankruptcy, the shame of which she thought would fall on her only, that she could not be consoled, and died very shortly after; and as she left no child, I found myself under the obligation of refunding her dowry, which, under my present circumstances, could not fail to destroy my every project. To tell the truth, therefore, the tears I shed at her death were not the effect of the loss of my wife, but of regret for my money which she had so foolishly squandered, and for hers, which I had to return to her father. Notwithstanding which I did not fail to act the good husband, and ordered her funeral so superb, that my creditors murmured at it. Though I had now become a widower, I did not cease to live on good terms with Don Andrea. Besides that I could not have gained anything by tricking him, he was the only man who was in possession of all my secrets, and I had still occasion for his assistance. I submitted, therefore, very patiently to all he required of me, and he was so much pleased with my conduct towards him, that he behaved in an equally handsome manner towards me.

CHAPTER XLIX.

GUZMAN, AFTER THE DEATH OF HIS WIFE, WISHES TO EMBRACE THE ECCLESIASTICAL LIFE, AND WITH THAT VIEW REPAIRS TO ALCALA DE HENARES TO STUDY—THE FRUITS OF HIS STUDIES.

AFTER having rendered the last duties to my wife, and her dowry to her father, I still remained in my own house, which was now all that was my own; and even this was completely stripped, with the exception of one room, which Don Andrea, out of compassion, had furnished for me with a few articles of trifling value. Here I was occupied in making reflections on the past, and in devising means for my future subsistence.

What now can I possibly do? said I to myself. I fear I shall find no more apothecaries, no banker like that at Milan, no more relations to trust their jewels to my care. What then is to become of me? O Sayavedra, my dear confidant, how do I now miss you! Why can you not be witness of my troubles when I stand so much in need of your address and advice? Were you now present, we could together devise some scheme for my relief; but, alas! I have lost you! I ought no longer to rely on your assistance, which, perhaps, at this moment, you repent sorely having ever afforded me.

This last thought affected me exceedingly, and I felt so disgusted with the world that I resolved to quit it. I must, said I, turn my thoughts to the Church. In that asylum I may possibly find that solid happiness which I have hitherto sought for in vain.

How many knaves have made their fortune in this way? why, therefore, should I not try my luck? I may become a good preacher; and the pulpit is the road to bishoprics. Let the worst come to the worst, with the money I may get for my house I may be able to purchase some chance benefice, and even should I be so unfortunate as not to meet with one, I can only put my money out at interest, and if the dividends be not sufficient for me to lead an agreeable life, I must make up for it by becoming chaplain to some rich nunnery. Though I already know more Latin than is necessary to fill a place of that description, yet will I, nevertheless, go to Alcala, and take one course of philosophy, and another of theology, that I may be the more worthy of it. And if the condition of a scholar should appear to me too arduous for a man of my age, I can but at last have recourse to the good fathers of the Order of St. Francis, who, when they have once heard me sing, would receive me among them, though I could not read a word.

Thus you see, friendly reader, that persons of wit are never at a loss. A fine resource truly! you will answer, to embrace an ecclesiastical life with the sole view of enjoying every terrestrial comfort, is not seeking a very canonical vocation. Agreed, I will not contend with casuists on this point, but will candidly confess that I consulted custom more than the Canons, and that, in thinking of becoming priest, I studied nothing but my own convenience. I communicated my intentions to my father-in-law, wishing to persuade him that they were the effect of a thousand moral reflections I had made on the uncertainty of all earthly blessings, or rather that I was inspired by

heaven. As this banker was not much better than myself, he applauded my resolution, which, he said, he could not sufficiently praise, were it only for the sake of escaping my creditors.

It now only remained for me to sell my house, which I very soon did. I met with a purchaser who gave me almost as much as it had cost me, the quarter of the town having been much built upon since I bought it. As soon as I had completed this sale, I carried the money to the bank. It could bring me in but very little, but in addition to its being there in safety, I could draw it out again whenever I pleased. After having thus disposed of my property, procured a proper dress for a student who aspired to sacred orders, which consisted of a long cloak and cassock, and after having bid adieu to Don Andrea and my best friends, I set out for the town of Alcala, where I arrived a few days before the opening of the colleges. I was at first doubtful where I should take up my lodging—whether to enter myself in a college, or hire an apartment and board in the town. I had been accustomed to enjoy entire liberty at my own house, to live according to my own fancy, to eat what I pleased, without being subject to stipulated hours; which I must conform to in a boarding-house, where I should dine and sup with the students, the majority of whom were mere children. On the other hand, when I considered the expense of an establishment of my own; of keeping a servant who might be addicted to thieving, gallantry, or wine, or perhaps all three together; not to mention other inconveniences which are attached to the life of a young man completely his own master. I decided at last

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... would enter myself at one of the boarding-houses, and accordingly agreed with one which I thought would be most suitable to my age.

I was not long without acquaintances. I was fortunate enough to meet with some students of about my own age. With these I associated; for I was ashamed to keep company with the younger ones. I began by applying myself to the study of philosophy, in which I possessed indefatigable perseverance with a natural genius, I soon made great progress, and in two years was considered one of the best scholars in the university. After having gone through the course of philosophy, I took my degrees at the university of Arts, in which I got the second place, and well deserved the first. This injustice was done at the instigation of one of our most celebrated professors. I did not murmur at it; on the contrary, I felt more pride in hearing it said by everybody that I had been unfairly passed over, than I should have felt if justice had been done to me. I next commenced upon theology, and continuing to study with the same ardour, it soon became mere amusement to me, and I felt, or, at least, fancied that I grew wiser every day.

Although I made it a point of honour never to miss a single lesson, and was, consequently, much engaged in my scholastic duties, yet I had still some time for pleasure. As I had been long accustomed to good cheer, and fared but badly at the boarding-house, I generally gave a little entertainment twice or thrice a week, by which I acquired the reputation of a rich and generous man; and what will more surprise you, during almost four years that I lived in

this manner, I formed no sort of acquaintance with females, even the most modest. I scarcely knew whether there were any lovely women in the town; in fact, I carefully shunned every opportunity of hearing anything about them. I took great credit to myself for being thus upon my guard against the fair sex; for I knew by experience how dangerous it was for me, and had the resolution during almost the whole course of my studies to avoid that rock: happy, indeed, I had completely finished them without at last splitting upon it!

I was now on the point of passing as Bachelor in Divinity; and as I was obliged in the first place to take orders, which are only bestowed on persons who possess some curé, chapel, or other living, I was greatly at a loss what to do; for since I had studied at the University, I had consumed the better half of my resources. In this dilemma I bethought myself of applying again to the father of expedients, Don Andrea. I had taken care to keep up a correspondence with him, in which I had rendered him an exact account of my success in my studies, which he had always professed himself extremely pleased at. I now wrote and informed him of my present difficulty, and entreated his advice. He answered that he was much pleased to have it in his power to oblige me; that he would with that view make over my wife's portion to me as if to found some chapel; and that in the deed it should be stipulated, that I should cause a mass to be said every day for the soul of the defunct. But, at the same time, I was to declare by another deed, that this property was not a farthing of it my own, and that I would put Don

Andrea in possession of it whenever he thought proper. A false conveyance of this description, made for religious purposes, so far from appearing to me to infringe the decrees of the holy councils, did not raise the slightest scruple in my conscience. I grant you I was a man not to be over-nice in the business, any more than my father-in-law, who, I verily believe, had never in his life transacted business less deviating than this from the Ecclesiastical Canons. Be that as it may, however, not being able to do otherwise, this was the gate at which I now fully intended to enter the sanctuary of the ministers of religion.

In the meantime, until I could receive orders, I began to avoid all sorts of company, and to live more regularly in frequenting places of worship. One day when the weather was extremely fine for walking, I quitted the town on a pilgrimage to St. Mary of the valley, an agreeable hermitage, situate about a mile distant. On my way I overtook a great concourse of people on their journey to the same spot, and the Chapel of the Saint was so crowded when I arrived, that there was scarcely room to kneel down in it. A lady, who sat two or three paces from me, observing my embarrassment, retired somewhat further back, as if by that action to make room for me next to her. I was extremely surprised at this polite attention from a female with whom I was not acquainted, and who, I thought, could not know me; and in spite of my affected gravity, I could not help fixing my eyes on her elegant figure, doubting not, from her dress and demeanour, that she was a lady of some consequence.

She carefully concealed her face from me, darting, however, an occasional glance at me with one eye,

which pierced my very soul. I took possession of the vacant place near her, and wishing to testify my gratitude in some compliment, I said in a whisper: "How dangerous is this politeness!"—"I can scarcely think that you can be afraid of it," said she in the same tone. I dared not reply for fear of being overheard by the ladies who sat by her, and seemed to be of her party. I looked at them all attentively, and in one of them I recognised the widow of one Dr. Gracia, a physician, a lady already in years, and who kept a boarding-house in the town. I knew that she had three daughters who were called the three Graces, as well on account of the name of their father, as of their lovely persons. I had now no doubt that the lady whom I had just spoken to must be one of these three celebrated sisters; and as report boasted particularly of the beauty and wit of the eldest, I could not help wishing that it might be her—a wish, however, which I could not entertain without considerable alarm for my heart. With the reputation of being extremely pretty, these young ladies had not the character of being Vestals. This was not much to be wondered at, Dr. Gracia having left his affairs in such a state as obliged his widow to take in boarders for a livelihood. If slander does not even spare young ladies brought up with the utmost severity, how could it possibly respect our three Graces, who were eternally surrounded with gallants? Their father had been a man of pleasure, and had caused them to be instructed in music and other accomplishments; more intent on fitting them for society than forming their minds to virtue. I was perfectly well acquainted with all this; and they on their side knew]

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who I was. They had heard that I was well versed in music, that I had plenty of money, and a peculiar talent in spending it. These excellent qualities, which they admired in a man, made them extremely desirous to scrape acquaintance with me, and to induce me to increase the number of their boarders. This proposal had before been made to me, but I had rejected it, for fear of involving myself in some fresh intrigue. I had even made oath to avoid every snare that love might lay for me, and I did not expect that, in the holy place where I now stood, I should break this oath. Nevertheless, I felt a sort of agitation which so much resembled the first emotions of a growing passion, that I was alarmed at it. "Guzman," said I to myself, "do not be a fool of yourself here. What if I should come to worship in this church? Let not my heart be taken by surprise."

Can you wish to lose the fruits of so many years' study?"

While my reason thus contended with my weakness, the ladies having finished their prayers, rose to leave the church. There were seven or eight of them, all of the same party. They passed by where I sat, and I rose to bow to them. The one whom I had so particularly noticed, and who was in reality the eldest of the three sisters, managed very adroitly, under pretence of adjusting her veil, to afford me a view of her beautiful face. I was so struck with it, that it was with the greatest difficulty I could restrain myself from following her. An impulse, however, which Heaven only could have bestowed upon me, held me back from so powerful and dangerous an attraction. I dropped down on my knees again, to

continue, or rather to begin my prayer, for I had as yet been so absorbed in other thoughts that I had forgotten the duty which brought me to church. I could not, however, divest my mind of the image of the enchantress who occupied it; and, more agitated than a vessel without sail or compass in the middle of the ocean, I yielded to the different emotions which possessed my heart.

My extreme uneasiness not permitting me to remain any longer in the chapel, I left it, not to trace the steps of the beauty who had made so much impression on me; on the contrary, my wish was to avoid her, and fearing that I should meet her in the road that led to the city, I took another route, and turned my steps towards the river, in the hope that while I walked along its banks I should insensibly lose all recollection of this redoubtable personage, whom my philosophy had not been able to withstand. And perhaps I should have become tranquil after a little reflection, but my stars willed it otherwise. A voice which I heard at the distance of ten or twelve paces from me, caused me to turn my head towards the spot from whence it came, and the very first thing that struck my eyes was that same Donna Maria Gracia, whose charms I was so assiduously shunning. She was seated on the grass and singing, while her sisters and the other ladies in company were preparing an elegant collation.

At this sight I was no longer master of myself, but advanced and saluted them. "You must agree, ladies," said I, "that fate is most propitious to me to-day, since it has been its will that I should meet you everywhere; but to complete my happiness I should

be seated by your side." Donna Maria replied with a smile, "that it was my own fault only if I were not, and that it was but just that so many fair shepherdesses should have at least one shepherd to protect them from the wolves." This answer delighted me, and I quickly joined the party, abandoning myself to all my natural gaiety. The mother and the daughter seemed to vie with each other in politeness towards me. I thought that I had never spent many such agreeable moments, and regretted exceedingly that I had declined the opportunity of associating with so charming a family. The other ladies were also very gracious, and I told them more than once that I thought all the loveliness in Alcala was in my presence. This compliment, as you may suppose, did not in the least offend them; and to show me that there was some justice in my remark, they prepared after the collation to entertain me with a concert. Two of the ladies played guitars which they had brought with them, and Donna Maria, and the others who had voices, accompanied them. A guitar was then presented to me, and I was entreated to play some airs to dance to, which I did with much less pleasure than I felt in seeing the ladies trip to it in the meadow like so many nymphs of Diana.

The eldest sister was the dancer I took most notice of. An air of peculiar nobleness and grace distinguished her from her companions. It is not surprising then that a man who took fire so easily as I did, could not resist such fine qualities. In truth I was so enamoured of Donna Maria, that I saw nobody but her. When she left off dancing, I seated myself at her feet, and presenting her with a guitar, entreated

that she would play and sing to it. This request she was willing to comply with, on condition that I would accompany her. She had heard my voice praised, she said, and she longed to hear it herself. As I had no less a longing to gratify her desire, I was easily prevailed on, and acquitted myself, as I need not tell you, very much to the satisfaction of the party assembled.

In this manner we continued to amuse ourselves until night, when the widow Gracia sounded a retreat, and we began to file off towards the town, Donna Maria and I walking last. It were useless to tell you that our conversation turned upon love. We were both too intent upon it to talk upon any other subject, and accordingly made a reciprocal declaration, and from that day perceived clearly that we were made for each other. As the other ladies in company had not so agreeable a conversation together as we had, they walked rather faster, and Donna Maria wishing to overtake them, either by chance or intentionally, made a false step, and must inevitably have fallen, had I not caught her in my arms. In raising her up I was bold enough to snatch a kiss. No sooner had I taken this liberty than, fearful that I had offended, I began to make excuses to the fair one, who, so far from resenting my boldness, told me in a lively manner, that I had done well in paying myself for the service I had rendered her, which she might otherwise have been ungrateful enough to have forgotten.

When we arrived at the widow's house, she gave me an invitation to walk in, which I willingly accepted. I partook of some refreshments, and prolonged my

visit till decency compelled me to take my leave. Before I retired, however, I obtained the widow's permission to call occasionally to assure her of my respect. I then bade adieu to Donna Maria, and was so transported with love that, instead of returning homewards, I took the way to the University, and only recognised my error in time to prevent my knocking at the gates. You will easily conceive that I slept but little that night, after having passed the day in the manner I have related.

The following day I went as usual to the schools of the University, where my distraction was such, that when I left them I scarcely knew what subject had been treated of. After dinner I could not resist the pleasure of visiting Donna Maria, to whom I listened much more attentively than I had done to the professor in the morning, and who detached me so completely from the University, that I soon ceased to go there at all. I renounced the orders I had been so anxious to obtain, changed my ecclesiastical for a most magnificent secular habit, and after having paid my landlord, became a boarder at the widow Gracia's; or rather, to speak without disguise, I gave myself up to the demon which possessed me. Every person of sense who was acquainted with me, pitied my blindness, and even the Rector of the University had the kindness to remonstrate with me on my change of conduct; but these friendly endeavours were of no avail. Fate would have it that I should persevere to my own ruin; or rather, perhaps, Heaven could no longer behold such a subject a minister of the Church.

CHAPTER L.

*GUZMAN MARRIES AGAIN AT ALCALA, AND SHORTLY
AFTER RETURNS TO LIVE AT MADRID WITH HIS
NEW WIFE.*

I LIVED most delightfully with my new landladies; they endeavoured to anticipate my every desire; in short, I was the master of the house. This life lasted for about three months, at the expiration of which time I began to talk of marriage. We soon came to terms; and, by way of making a greater fool of myself, I expended a considerable sum of money in wedding-clothes. One would have thought that I had cart-loads of money; though, to say the truth, I was almost at my last shift.

My mother-in-law, who was a good sort of woman, very easily led away by finery, seeing the fine show I made, thought that I was, of course, possessed of considerable property, and that the fortune of her whole family was made by obtaining me for a son-in-law. As it was necessary that a young man should be employed, she proposed to me to apply myself to physic, telling me that it was a very lucrative profession, and that if her husband had been more assiduous in it, he might have left his widow and children much better off than they were. To induce me to follow her advice, she offered me all Dr. Garcia's books and memoranda, not doubting, as she said, that with such assistance, and my excellent understanding, I should soon become an excellent physician. To gratify her wishes, I was com-

placent enough to study for about six months under some of the most famous professors of medicine; but their lessons were not at all to my taste, and I soon became disgusted with a study which, at the best, could only maintain me in my old age. I pretended, therefore, that I had received letters from one of my friends, offering me a lucrative post at Madrid, in which I could not fail to grow rich in a very few years. I imparted this news to my mother-in-law, who, believing it to be true, was the first to recommend me to accept the situation, much as she really regretted the loss of my society.

The aversion I felt for the study of medicine was not the only reason for my wishing to leave Alcala. My finances were now at a very low ebb, and I did not wish to expose my poverty in a place where I had hitherto been considered in easy circumstances. In addition to this, I must inform you that Donna Maria, since her marriage, had thought proper to renew an intercourse with certain students whose tender attentions she had formerly encouraged. This was the more provoking to me, as she could expect no grateful acknowledgments from such gallants but serenades and boxes of sweetmeats. I was by no means satisfied with such empty profits; for it appeared to me, that a husband who kindly condescended to shut his eyes to his wife's gallantries, deserved at least that abundance should reign in his house. I resolved, therefore, to leave a place where my wife had formed such bad acquaintances, and to establish ourselves at Madrid, where much better were to be met with.

Being quite prepared for the journey, we bade

adieu to our friends and family, and set off in a genteel equipage for that city, so justly called the refuge for the destitute, Madrid. I had entirely broken with my father-in-law, Don Andrea, on the occasion of my second marriage, which I had contracted contrary to his advice. I thought no more of him; and as to my creditors, as I had still two years before me, I troubled myself but little on that head, nothing doubting, that before they could legally annoy me again, I should either make some lucky hit, or my wife's beauty would enable us to form, far enough out of their reach, a solid establishment.

A poor devil of a merchant from Alicant was the first who fell into our snares. Unfortunately for him, he had joined us on our route, and having seen Donna Maria, conceived a violent love for her. We clearly perceived this when, having arrived at Madrid, he compelled us, as it were, to stop at the inn where he lodged; and he assured us we should find everything most comfortable. "The landlady," said he, "is one of the best women in the world. She has most excellent apartments, and a most famous cook." There was no resisting the earnestness of his entreaties, which sufficiently betrayed the goodness of his intentions. We were, therefore, easily persuaded, and were conducted to the inn, where we were exceedingly well received by the landlady, who appeared to us to be really respectable, and very much the friend of the merchant. She allotted to us one of the best apartments in the house, and tendered her services most obsequiously on any occasion that we might require them.

Our travelling companion requested that we would

leave to him the care of providing a good supper for us, in which office he acquitted himself like a rich man who wished only to please. He spared nothing during the meal to gain my good graces. He paid much more attention to me than to my wife, perhaps imagining that I was the most likely to oppose his design. After supper, I inquired what was to pay, and was answered that everything was settled. I was overjoyed; but to let him see that I knew how to treat as well as he did, I invited him to dine with me the next day, and in the meantime sent orders to the cook to prepare an excellent dinner for three persons. It is true that I fully intended he should pay for it; and, accordingly, no sooner was dinner over than I went out under pretence of having some important business at the court end of the town, requesting him to excuse me, and to be so kind as to keep my wife company in my absence. This exactly suited him as well as me. Donna Maria, although sufficiently adorned by her natural beauty, had passed the whole morning in adding to it all the charms that could be borrowed of art, so that she appeared indeed more lovely than usual. She proposed to play to pass the time, and won a hundred ducats off our visitor, which he was obliged to lose to her out of gallantry.

This was nothing to what followed, for beginning to be more liberal in proportion as he became deeper in love, he put himself to a frightful expense. He presented my wife with several magnificent dresses, and a quantity of jewels. He conducted her sometimes to the promenade, sometimes to the theatres, and treated her and me every day in the most profuse manner. All this generosity on his part, you will

say, could not be for nothing. I believe so as well as you. Donna Maria was naturally of too grateful a disposition not to make some return for such attentions. But I cared little or nothing about that. The husband of a coquette, when he is in indigence, and finds his account in allowing his wife to flirt, ought at least to be complacent. The only fools are those gallants who purchase so dearly of him favours of which he is surfeited. As for me, I soon found myself by my prudent behaviour in a most enviable situation. We soon left our lodgings, and took a whole house to ourselves to live at greater liberty, ornamenting it with the most elegant furniture, which Signor Diego (for that was the merchant's name) had the kindness to pay for. What a joyful life did we there lead! good cheer, love, and indeed every pleasure were ours.

The merchant could not be better satisfied than he was with his lot, and we were equally so with ours. Concord and peace reigned in our little abode, when a young German nobleman, handsome, well made, and with a grand equipage, chanced to see my wife at the play-house with Signor Diego, and thought her so handsome, that he was most anxious to know who she was. Her superb dress and noble air impressed him with the idea that she was a lady of quality, while, on the other hand, the looks and dress of the merchant were by no means prepossessing. He knew not what to think of such a couple. At first he took Diego to be an attendant upon the lady; but the familiarity with which he treated her made him think at last that he must be her husband. To ascertain the truth, he caused her to be followed

after the play by a clever valet, who returned with a faithful account of her situation; and the German, from his report, doubted not that he should soon be able to supplant the ugly merchant in her good graces.

To bring this about, he had a private conference with our late landlady, whom, by dint of presents, he soon gained over to his interests. This woman, from whom we had parted on good terms, was in the habit of calling upon us occasionally. One day, in a private conversation with Donna Maria, she drew so flattering a portrait of the German, that she engaged her to take a walk with her, unknown to Diego, where that young gentleman met her as though by chance. In addition to his fine figure and natural beauty, his manners were agreeable and insinuating. My wife took a fancy to him at first sight, and he did not, therefore, long languish. The proofs of gratitude of this gallant were not like those of Don Diego; but purses of a hundred doubloons each, valuable diamonds, superb tapestry, and rich plate. As soon as we found that this young nobleman was so prodigal of his riches towards us, we attached ourselves to him, and began to neglect our citizen of Alicant most outrageously. Donna Maria even favoured his rival in his presence.

[Signor Diego was not deficient in pride. He was one of those rich merchants who look upon themselves as persons of quality. Not being willing to suffer that any one should be preferred to him, after what he had done for us, he began to murmur. From murmurs he proceeded to reproaches, and from reproaches to threats. His passion excited my anger,

and I told him that I chose to be master of my own house, and begged he would give himself no airs. He had not expected that I should have assumed so high a tone; and judging from that circumstance that, instead of my having been his dupe, he had been mine all the while, he wisely resolved to withdraw, which he did, bursting with rage and spite, instead of returning a thousand thanks to Heaven for having delivered him from such dangerous blood-suckers.

The German gentleman, far from diminishing our household expenses, increased them daily. He loaded us with presents, and we began to give ourselves great airs. I had three footmen, and my wife two female attendants. We lived as if our property was doomed to last all our lives. It was not, however, very far from its termination. Our gallant foolishly thought fit to boast of his good fortune to a friend, a young Count of the Court, and to bring him with him to visit us. As soon as this latter saw Donna Maria, he became his friend's rival. This was of little consequence. The lady would have had wit enough to have pleased them both; but the Count wishing that two or three other of his fashionable friends should partake of his amusements, introduced them also to our house, where these youths altogether turned the house almost out of windows; nothing was to be heard but laughing and singing from morning till night, and nothing could be done but gaming and drinking. And as these youngsters' pockets were not always well stored, they borrowed and cheated; and though all this property generally fell into our hands, it went as lightly as it came.

So irregular a life could not fail to draw some misfortune upon us. Two of these young gentlemen, already irritated by jealousy, had a trifling dispute at play one night, upon which they immediately drew their swords. They fought; and before they could be separated, one of them received a mortal wound. The parents of the wounded gentleman, having learnt that this accident happened at my house, which they considered a resort for the disorderly, caused me to be arrested in my bed one morning by a large body of constables, who, after having possessed themselves of the principal part of my property, led me to prison.

This sudden intrusion of justice awoke my wife in rather a disagreeable manner, who rose and dressed herself speedily, in order to intercede with one of the principal judges, a person respectable as well from his venerable appearance as his advanced age. She threw herself at his feet with tears in her eyes, and implored his support with the most affecting language. The old man, notwithstanding his years, was less interested by the entreaties of his fair petitioner than by the charms of her person. He raised her up, and introduced her into his closet, that, as he said, her audience might not be interrupted; and while she related the affair to him, the old satyr, who scarcely listened to a word she said, dried her tears with his handkerchief with one hand, while he placed the other trembling on her bosom. In short, he gave her hopes that the unlucky adventure which had happened to me would have no ill consequences, and immediately sent orders to the gaoler to treat me well, for he was a magistrate of great authority, and might have released me immediately had he been

so inclined, but he wanted a few more audiences with my wife. He appointed her to wait upon him the next day at the same hour. This she did, and was immediately shown into his closet again, where she found him fully dressed, combed, perfumed, and his beard neatly trimmed for the occasion. The success of this second visit was a promise that I should the next day be set at liberty; and my wife was obliged to call upon him again, to receive from his own hands the warrant for my release.

I thought myself very lucky in having got over this affair in so short a time, though it had cost me almost half I was worth. I flattered myself that, with so powerful a protector as my wife had now made, we might in future do anything we pleased with impunity. Immediately after dinner I repaired to the judge's house, where I thanked him for his great goodness. He received me very politely, and invited me to pay him a visit occasionally. I pretended to be extremely sensibly of this honour, and, on taking leave, besought a continuance of his protection. He assured me that I might rely upon it, and, the better to convince me, he honoured us with a visit that very evening. We received him in such a manner, that if he had been Prime Minister of Spain he could not have had more respect shown him. As he told us that he liked music, my wife and I formed a little concert for his amusement. We afterwards regaled him with fruits and sweetmeats, which he repaid the next day by a handsome present to my wife.

This superannuated gallant accustomed himself by degrees to spend every evening in a house where he

was so well entertained. At last he began to find my presence troublesome to him, and to get me out of the way, he told me one day that I was dining with him, that 'twas a pity a man of sense and learning as I was should pass his youth away in idleness, that he would think of some post that would suit me, in which I should be simple indeed if I did not speedily grow rich. I assured him that my idleness was quite contrary to my inclinations, and that he would most sensibly oblige me if he would procure me a useful occupation, in which I trusted I could acquit myself to his satisfaction. The next day he paid me another visit, and put into my hands a commission to be one of the Receivers of King's Taxes, signifying to me, at the same time, that it would be necessary for me to repair to the precinct to which I was appointed without delay. Although I had but little inclination to this employment, I accepted it, and returned my benefactor as many thanks as if he had raised me to one of the first posts in the kingdom. My wife was scarcely better pleased at it than I was, but we resolved in secret to make trial whether, during my absence, our amorous grey-beard would be sufficiently generous to recompense us for the loss of the German gentleman.

I accordingly took leave of Donna Maria, leaving the field open to her old Adonis. I arrived at the department to which I was appointed, entered upon my new charge, and began to exercise it; but, alas! I soon found that, without robbing, extortion, and all sorts of violence upon the poor country people, I should be reduced to worse straits than ever. In short, I did not like the business, for I could not

help thinking that a robber on the highway was an honest profession. Accordingly I had determined, at the expiration of the first three months, to be requested to be recalled. That time, however, had not elapsed before my patron wrote to me of his own accord to return to Madrid. This letter caused me more joy than I had felt when he so charitably released me from prison. I gave up my post with all my heart, and returned to my patron, very curious to learn how he could have grown tired of my absence. I went to see him the first thing on my arrival, and he began immediately to complain of Donna Maria's coquettish inclinations. "Your wife," said he, "has one very great fault, which is, that she loves none but young sparks. In vain have I represented to her that the many visitors of this description that she receives must infallibly ruin her; she will not break off such connections: in short, she is incorrigible. My sole reason," continued he, "for recalling you, was to inform you of her indiscretion, and to caution you to keep a better check upon her conduct, lest, in the event of any second accident happening at your house, you may not always be able to find powerful and disinterested protectors." I understood his meaning perfectly, and promised the old man that my wife should be more guarded in her future conduct; after which, I went home, well assured that my wife would tell the story in quite a different way; as in fact she did: for no sooner had I mentioned his name, than she began to declaim against him as an avaricious old curmudgeon, who had made her none but the most insignificant presents ever since my departure.

I entered into her resentment, and permitted more

young men than ever to frequent our house; which the old magistrate having remarked, he reproached me for having broken my word with him, and, as though he had made my fortune, he accused me of making him an ungrateful return for all the benefits he had conferred on me. At length we lost all patience, and, to get rid at once of so troublesome a visitor, I ordered the servants to say we were not at home whenever he called.

No sooner did he perceive that we were determined to release ourselves from his tyranny than his love was converted into hatred, and in his passion he caused us to be condemned to leave Madrid in three days, under pain of imprisonment for the remainder of our lives. He thought that by this he would undoubtedly have reduced us to implore his mercy, and do just as he pleased; but he was much mistaken, for no sooner was this unjust sentence made known to us than we guessed from whence it came, and resolved to obey it, my wife choosing rather to travel all over the world than have anything more to do with this old rascal, and I beginning to be apprehensive that my creditors would shortly be calling upon me for the remainder of my composition money.

CHAPTER LI.

GUZMAN AND HIS WIFE, HAVING BEEN OBLIGED TO LEAVE MADRID FOR THEIR EXEMPLARY AND MORAL MODE OF LIFE, PROCEED TO SEVILLE, WHERE GUZMAN FINDS HIS MOTHER.

THE first day we were fully employed in converting all our effects into ready money. On the second we

hired four mules to carry us and our baggage, and departed from Madrid on the morning of the third, according to the sentence.

We took the road to Seville, not only to gratify my great desire to revisit my native country, but to please Donna Maria, who burned with impatience to try the effect of her charms upon the rich merchants who, I had told her, were continually arriving from Peru, laden with gold and jewels. She doubted not that she should fill her coffers at their expense. Notwithstanding our good intentions towards these gentlemen, however, we travelled very slowly for fear of fatigue; and I own that I felt a secret pleasure in surveying the country through which I had formerly passed, although it recalled to my remembrance the sad adventures of my youth. I passed the inn where I had been a servant; and at the sight of Cantillana I fancied I still smelt those excellent ragouts of mules with which I had formerly been regaled; and I did not forget the cudgelling which had been so liberally bestowed on me and the muleteer by the two officers of the Holy Brotherhood. I arrived and dined at that charming inn where they made omelets of pullets. I told my wife this story, and she laughed at it heartily. At last I reached the hermitage where I lay the first night after I left Seville, and, transported with the recollection, I addressed the saint in these terms: "O great St. Lazarus!" cried I, "when I left the steps of thy chapel 'twas with tears in my eyes, on foot, alone, and poor, but innocent; and now thou seest me return, married, and in good condition, and well mounted, but how innocent, Heaven and thou know!"

It was quite night when we arrived at Seville, so that we were obliged to take up our quarters at the first inn we came to ; but the next morning I rose betimes and took lodgings in St. Bartholomew Street, whither I had my baggage conveyed. The next thing I did was to ask after my mother, but I could hear no news of her until some months afterwards, when Donna Maria being on a visit to a lady with whom she had made an acquaintance, heard her name mentioned by mere chance, and was much astonished to learn that she lived very near us with a young lady who passed for her daughter. No sooner had I ascertained my mother's residence than I flew to it, found her at home, and we embraced with sincere affection.

We related to each other in a few words the adventures that had happened to us both since our parting, each of us, however, concealing whatever we thought fit. She was very anxious, for example, to persuade me that she had brought up the young lady who lived with her out of pure charity, having been attached to her from her earliest infancy. I pretended to believe her word implicitly, though I entertained considerable doubt whether she had not other views which she did not choose to confess. After a long conversation, I introduced Donna Maria to her. My mother received her very kindly, and embraced her in an affectionate manner not very common in a mother-in-law.

To celebrate our reunion, my mother invited us to several entertainments, which we returned ; and as I had occasion for an old mouser like her to instruct my wife in the coquetries of the ladies of Seville,

where the modes of gallantry differed from those at Alcala and Madrid, I proposed to her to come and live with us, representing to her how much more agreeably she might pass her time. She answered "that she could not make up her mind to desert her adopted daughter, and that she feared also she should not be able to agree long with my wife." I endeavoured to remove the first obstacle, by consenting to receive the young lady into my family also. "You cannot think of it, my son," said my mother. "You must know but little of women, if you think that two lively young ladies like Petronilla and Donna Maria can live even one month together, without quarrelling themselves, and indeed setting the whole house in an uproar."

I succeeded, however, in conquering the repugnance that my mother felt to grant my request. It is true that she yielded at last upon my assurance that she would always find in my wife a daughter submissive to her wishes. At last she came alone to reside with us, choosing rather to leave Petronilla to herself than to be the cause of dissensions in my family. At the beginning all went on smoothly, and the only contention was, who should be the most complaisant. Each seemed to endeavour to anticipate the desire of the other. They addressed each other affectionately, and if this good understanding had but lasted, we could not have failed in making our fortune; but, unfortunately, before the expiration of three months everything changed, and these same ladies, who had hitherto agreed so well, now began to pursue a different conduct. My mother wished to govern despotically, which my wife would not submit to. They

were constantly disputing and quarrelling, and peace was entirely banished the house. Sometimes I endeavoured to reconcile them, and to act as umpire, but this only brought upon me the fury of her whom I decided against. What made matters worse was, that the ships which were expected from India did not come in that year. Money became scarce, and consequently the profits of my wife's gallantries were but trifling, in comparison with the daily expense of our establishment. Donna Maria was not one who could listen to economy, and no clothes or ornaments were good enough for her. The natural consequence of all this was, that as our funds diminished, so in proportion our vexations increased. We had placed great reliance upon the merchants from Peru, who never came at all; and my wife, to whom I had given a grand idea of the opulence and generosity of these merchants, reproached me as if I had been the cause of their delay. In short, everything fell upon me.

As good luck would have it, I happened to become acquainted with an Italian, captain of a Neapolitan galley, who, by order of the Court, had come to Malaga to carry the Bishop of that city to Naples; but that prelate not being ready to embark, he had come to Seville in the hopes of meeting with merchandise to freight his vessel for Italy. I met him by chance one day at a merchant's house, and was delighted in having found a man who spoke Italian as well as myself. He was, on his side, equally pleased, and we became very intimate. I invited him to my house, and introduced him to my wife, who did not fail to charm him. He made me some trifling presents, which would have been more con-

siderable if his affairs would have permitted him to remain any longer at Seville; but as he could not make the bishop wait for him, and could not bear the idea of parting from my wife, he found means to conciliate his love with his duty, by persuading her to desert me, and fly with him into Italy. After all, I believe that he did not find it a very difficult matter to prevail upon her, for she had been long out of humour with me, and hated my mother more and more every day; so that we had not an hour's quiet for her. However that might be, I cared but little about it; and, indeed, thought myself happy and rich in having got rid of her, notwithstanding she had taken her jewels and everything of value about the house with her; in which the captain had very honestly assisted her, before I had the least suspicion of their intentions.

CHAPTER LII.

GUZMAN, AFTER HIS WIFE'S ELOPEMENT, RESIDES FOR SOMETIME WITH HIS MOTHER; BUT AT LENGTH ENTERS INTO THE SERVICE OF A LADY OF QUALITY.

I WAS prudent enough to keep this affair secret, knowing that all the scandal of it would be reflected upon me. I sold what remained of my property, which consisted only of some of the worst of the furniture, and movables, which my wife had condescended to leave behind, and employed the money in making merry with my friends. My mother

accommodated herself as long as she could to the life I led, but at last growing tired of it, she returned to the house where she had left Petronilla, telling me that she could now live more at her ease with her than she could expect to do with me. I offered no opposition to her plans, and we parted again in perfect good will towards each other.

You will not be surprised that a continued train of expenditure without any income soon reduced me to my original condition of life; but an adventurer, in whatever state it may please fortune to place him, should always find resources in his wits. Mine did not now abandon me. I learnt one day that there resided in the town a rich widow, whose husband had been Governor of a city in the West Indies, and had died there, leaving his lady in great affluence. This widow, who affected great devotion, had no children, but several relations of consequence, and was at this time in search of a man, to whom she could confide the management of her affairs, well knowing that places of this description are not always filled by men of probity.

This post was a great temptation to me, and I resolved to spare nothing to obtain it, knowing that my fortune was made if I could succeed. After having tormented my brains for some time to invent some stratagem to attain my ends, I learnt that her Father Confessor was a Dominican Friar, who had an absolute dominion over all her wishes, and that he must be gained over to my interest. To this end I bought a purse, and put eight pistoles and twenty ducats of gold in it, to which I added a ring of trifling value, and a gold seal which my mother had

presented to my wife the first day she saw her. After which I laid by my sword, and put on a very plain suit of clothes. In this state I repaired to the Convent of the Dominicans, where I asked leave to speak to the Reverend Father beforementioned, who was a very favourite preacher, and had converted many. I was taken for one of his penitents, and was conducted immediately to his chamber, which I entered with a hypocritical countenance, as if afraid to cast my eyes on so sacred a person, and in a low and soft voice: "Most Reverend Father," said I, "I have just picked up this purse, which appears to be full of gold and silver coins, and although I am but a poor man, I know that I have no right to keep it. I have therefore taken the liberty of asking for you, that I might place it in the hands of your reverence to dispose of as you may think fit."

The good father, charmed with so heroic an action in a person whose wants might have excused his appropriating it to himself, surveyed me from head to foot, and commended my disinterested and religious behaviour. He could not sufficiently extol me; and feeling, at the same time, a desire to render me some service, as a recompense for my virtue, he asked me a few questions as to my situation in life and talents, that he might know what I was capable of. "Reverend Father," said I, "I have now been at Seville for sometime, entirely out of employment. I was Receiver of Taxes at Madrid; but finding myself inclined to spend my own money to assist rather than persecute the poor, I was compelled to resign that situation; from which I became steward to a nobleman, whose affairs were in great confusion.

These might soon have been settled; but in proportion as I arranged them, he involved them afresh, so that after having served him four years with the utmost zeal and fidelity, I was obliged to leave him as much a beggar as when I first entered his service, and without even having received my wages."

The Confessor listened to me with great attention; and surprised at hearing a man, whose dress did not much prepossess him in favour of his education, speak in such good terms, he asked me if I had ever studied. I told him that I had studied most assiduously with the intention of entering the Church; but that after having seriously reflected on a vocation which required so many virtues which I did not possess, I had given up such an idea. He was curious to ascertain how far I had gone in theology; and as all my lessons were still fresh in my memory, I answered his questions in a manner which astonished him. My interview with him lasted two hours, and he was so well pleased with me, that he assured me of his friendship, and, in taking leave, told me, that on the Sunday following he would advertise the purse I had found in his church, and that if I would call upon him on the Tuesday following, he hoped he might by that time hear of some place to suit me.

After having left his reverence I repaired to my mother's. "I have lost," said I, "the purse you gave me, in which were your ring and casket, together with eight pistoles and twenty crowns in gold of my own. Happily, however, it has fallen into the hands of a Dominican Father, who will advertise it in his church on Sunday. You must, therefore, go there, and claim it as your property, as I do not wish



and without even having received my wages. The Confessor listened to me with great attention and surprised at hearing a man, whose dress much prepossessed him in favour of his education in such good terms, he asked me if I had ever intended the intention of entering the Church; but having seriously reflected on a vocation required so many virtues which I did not possess, I had given up such an idea. He was curious to learn how far I had gone in theology; and as my lessons were still fresh in my memory, I answered his questions in a manner which astonished him. My interview with him lasted two hours, and he was so well pleased with me, that he assured me of his friendship, and, in taking leave, told me, that on the Tuesday following he would advertise the purse I had lost in his church, and that if I would call upon him the Tuesday following, he hoped he might be able to hear of some place to suit me.

After having left his reverence I repaired to my mother's. "I have lost," said I, "the purse which you gave me, in which were your ring and cash together with eight pistoles and twenty crowns."



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to appear before his reverence, for certain reasons which I will afterwards explain." After a little more instruction, the good woman did not fail to repair on the day fixed to the Dominican's Church, where she heard the father publish the purse as he had promised, not forgetting to bestow the greatest eulogiums on the honesty of the poor man who had found it and delivered it to him. My mother, who knew as well as I did the contents of the purse, had but little difficulty in getting it restored her, after leaving two pistoles with his reverence as a reward for the honesty of the person who found it.

My purse then was restored to me with the loss of two pistoles only. Tuesday had no sooner arrived than I waited upon the Dominican again, who received me very kindly. "My son," said he, "a good old woman, who has claimed the purse which you found, has left two pistoles with me in charge for you." I affected to be scrupulous of receiving this present, as I had only done what was my duty, for which I did not deserve or desire to be remunerated; but the good father told me that he thought I well deserved it, and obliged me to accept of it; which, as you will suppose, I no longer refused, purely in obedience to his commands.

He then informed me that he had some better news to communicate, which was, that he had obtained for me the situation as steward in the family of one of the principal ladies in Seville. "You cannot but be happy in this family," said he, "for the remainder of your days, if you perform your duty conscientiously, for which I entertain so good an opinion of you that I have passed my word." At

words like these, so flattering to such a rogue, I prostrated myself at his reverence's feet, and embraced his knees with transport. He assisted me to rise, and assured me of his protection. Then charging me with a letter to the lady, who proved to be the widow before-mentioned, he told me that he had already prepared her to receive me.

I went immediately to pay my respects to my new mistress, and it was not difficult to perceive, by the reception I met with, that the friar had told wonders of me. She addressed me, not as a man who was to be her servant, but as one of whom she already entertained the highest opinion. The good father had also taken care to fix my salary and perquisites. She asked me if I was satisfied. I answered with a modest air, "that it was more than I deserved, but that I would endeavour to render myself worthy of her bounty by my care and fidelity in her service." My person and conversation pleased her infinitely, and she desired me to consider myself in her service from that moment. Accordingly, I had my trunk carried in that evening, in which was all I possessed.

A very handsome room was assigned me, and I remarked with pleasure that the other servants looked upon me as their superior, and as one whom their lady would have respect paid to. All her private papers were entrusted to me, and I applied myself so assiduously in discharge of my trust, that I despatched as much business in fifteen days as my mistress expected would have taken up six months. Overjoyed at the acquisition of so expeditious an accountant, she never saw the Dominican but she praised me exceedingly, which afforded the good

father great pleasure, who really thought me a young man of integrity and virtue.

I was frequently obliged to consult my lady on affairs which could not be settled without her approbation, and these interviews sometimes lasted for some hours. On these occasions I always behaved myself with so much respect, softness, and insinuation, that I perceived I was daily gaining ground in her good will. At first she had fixed certain times for me to speak with her on domestic affairs, which were in the morning at her toilet, and in the evening after supper. This did not last long, for she would come into my room after dinner, under some pretence or other, and spend hours with me in discourse which had no relation to business. Her fondness for me increased daily, and I could not but foresee the happiness she designed me. I affected for a long time not to understand her kind intentions; but flesh is flesh; and she having condescended to make advances at least half way, I could not forbear meeting her the other half. She excused her frailty by saying she designed to marry me privately, and I abandoned myself entirely to my good fortune, from which I should undoubtedly have reaped considerable advantage had I been prudent enough to maintain my ground.

CHAPTER LIII.

*HOW GUZMAN SUDDENLY LOSES HIS MISTRESS'S FAVOUR,
AND IS CONDEMNED TO THE GALLEYS.*

No sooner had I found in any part of my life that I might swim in deep water, than I was drowned.

Finding that I was now beloved by my mistress, and looked upon by the servants as one whose favour was of consequence, I began to act quite a different character in the family, and set myself up to be absolute lord of all. I bought the most expensive clothes, spent money like a gentleman, and, to crown all, took an under steward to look after the business of the house. Madam herself was not a whit more prudent, and, consulting her love rather than her reason, approved of everything I did.

This was by no means the case with her relations, who, as they had an eye to the succession, observed her steps most vigilantly. They had conceived no great liking for me when I first entered the service, being rather suspicious, and not without reason, of the very devout air I assumed; but when they learnt that I carried all before me in the family, they began to reflect seriously upon it. They knew who I was, and not thinking that I was married, became very apprehensive lest the too tender widow should eventually take me into the place of the defunct governor, if she had not already done so; especially when they recollected that she had some years before contracted marriage clandestinely with one of my predecessors, who, fortunately for the lady's heirs, had thought proper to die shortly afterwards. This made them very uneasy, and they had many meetings among themselves to deliberate upon the most efficacious mode of ridding themselves of so formidable a rival in the lady's favour. All their endeavours, however, would have been ineffectual had I not ruined myself in my mistress's opinion by my imprudent conduct.

The tender connection I had formed with the love-

sick lady became daily less lively on my part; for, to say the truth, she was far from possessing qualities calculated long to attach the inclinations of a gallant man. Unfortunately, also, for our amours, I had cast my eyes on a young girl in the house, a pretty merry wench of about sixteen or seventeen years of age. A man who had money unlimited at his command, and the entire government of the family, was not a conquest to be despised by a waiting-maid, so that I soon lured her to my purpose, and we concerted measures so well, that we kept our correspondence secret for a considerable time. There were, however, other women in the house, and it was not possible, therefore, that we could remain long undiscovered. Celia, which was the damsel's name, soon began to dress herself out in the jewels and ornaments I had given her, and to boast of her money. Her companions, in consequence, became jealous of her, and informed their mistress, who ordered them to watch her, and neglect nothing to ascertain the source of all this finery. These directions were punctually obeyed; and it was soon discovered that Celia had nocturnal conversations with me for three or four hours in my chamber. This news struck like a dagger to the lady's heart, for she had hitherto been confident of my fidelity. She could not think me guilty of such perfidy, and determined to be thoroughly convinced herself before she satisfied her vengeance.

I lay in a chamber which communicated with my mistress's by a closet in which there was a private door covered with tapestry. In addition to this, there was an opening which I knew nothing of, directly against my bed's-head, so that a person listening

might easily hear whatever was said in my chamber, particularly when I was in bed. In this spot the widow placed herself one night, and, listening attentively to my conversation with Celia, she overheard us distinctly speaking of herself; and though we had frequently before amused ourselves at her expense, yet, as the devil would have it, we had never before spoken so ill of her. We communicated to each other without reserve the various frailties and natural defects we had observed in her, and, in short, pulled her to pieces from head to foot. You will readily imagine the lady's rage at hearing herself painted in such glowing colours. She was at first tempted to enter my chamber and vent her fury on us immediately; but after a little reflection, she very wisely thought it more prudent to retire, and meditate her revenge more privately, than to make all the servants in the house laugh at her expense.

No sooner had day arrived than she sent for her nearest relation, to tell him that I was a complete rogue; that I had not been content with robbing her and putting all her affairs into disorder, but had dishonoured her house; in short, that she was determined no longer to overlook my knaveries, and only wished that I might be punished according to my deserts. She could not possibly have selected a more fit person to promote her wishes in this respect than this relation of hers, who, hoping one day or other to be her heir, had more interest than any one to remove me from the testatrix. He was, therefore, highly delighted at so favourable an opportunity, and made haste to profit by it, lest the lady should change her mind. He knew her well, and saw plainly that

she only acted this part out of some jealous pique, and accordingly exerted himself with such effect that in less than two hours he obtained a warrant against me, so that before I had risen from my bed an Alguazil entered my chamber, and led me off to prison.

I was at first inclined to consider this as a token of remembrance, either from my relations at Genoa, or my creditors at Madrid; and it was upwards of two hours before I learnt the real cause of my imprisonment. At first I did but laugh at it, flattering myself that my mistress loved me too well to leave me to the severity of the laws, and I expected every moment to receive a message that she was no longer irritated against me, and had obtained my pardon. Buoyed up with this hope, I bore without impatience or complaint those fetters which I felt convinced love would shortly break for me; and I considered myself more like a lover punished for infidelity, than a steward imprisoned for robbing his mistress. I was, however, most grievously mistaken, for I was required forthwith to render an account of my administration, which had lasted two years. I now began to grow uneasy, for the manner in which I had dissipated the widow's money to my own purposes left so large a balance between the receipts and expenditure, that I would have defied any steward in the most noble family to have filled up the gap. It was in vain for me to puzzle my brain; for, to make the best of it, I was four thousand crowns short. To complete my ruin, the honest man whom I had employed as understeward, while I thought of nothing but my pleasure, no sooner saw me thrown into gaol, than, to save himself from the same fate, which he knew he

These might soon have been settled; but in proportion as I arranged them, he involved them afresh, so that after having served him four years with the utmost zeal and fidelity, I was obliged to leave him as much a beggar as when I first entered his service, and without even having received my wages."

The Confessor listened to me with great attention; and surprised at hearing a man, whose dress did not much prepossess him in favour of his education, speak in such good terms, he asked me if I had ever studied. I told him that I had studied most assiduously with the intention of entering the Church; but that after having seriously reflected on a vocation which required so many virtues which I did not possess, I had given up such an idea. He was curious to ascertain how far I had gone in theology; and as all my lessons were still fresh in my memory, I answered his questions in a manner which astonished him. My interview with him lasted two hours, and he was so well pleased with me, that he assured me of his friendship, and, in taking leave, told me, that on the Sunday following he would advertise the purse I had found in his church, and that if I would call upon him on the Tuesday following, he hoped he might by that time hear of some place to suit me.

After having left his reverence I repaired to my mother's. "I have lost," said I, "the purse you gave me, in which were your ring and casket, together with eight pistoles and twenty crowns in gold of my own. Happily, however, it has fallen into the hands of a Dominican Father, who will advertise it in his church on Sunday. You must, therefore, go there, and claim it as your property, as I do not wish



sight, and, accordingly, placed his wallet under the table, keeping his foot upon it. I felt a great itch to be a match for this cunning gentleman, and accordingly slipped very gently under the table, and cutting his wallet open with a sharp knife, I drew out two parcels, which I handed over in charge to one of my companions, named Soto, with whom I had become acquainted in prison. When we had left the inn, and had walked about a mile, I requested Soto to give me the parcels, that we might see what our booty consisted of, and divide it. Soto replied, that he did not know what I alluded to. I thought at first that he was joking, but that was very far from his thoughts, and he persisted with oaths that he had received nothing of me. When I found he was in earnest, I reproached him with his ingratitude and perfidy; but he only laughed at my reproaches and threats, and kept quiet possession of the parcels.

His behaviour quite enraged me, and I resolved to be revenged on him, by explaining the whole affair to the conductor, choosing rather that he should profit by the theft than such an ungrateful and impudent rascal. This resolution I put into execution at night when we reached the inn where we were to sleep.

I had no sooner related the story to the conductor, than he called Soto before him, and asked him for the two parcels. The rascal answered that he had got nothing of the sort, and that I must be a great rogue to make such an accusation. "You will not give them up with a good grace, then?" replied the conductor. "Very well, my friend, we will treat you then as you deserve." At the same time he ordered the guards to flog him until he confessed.



great authority over the galley-slaves, and which he usually exercises with brutality, my first endeavour was to gain his friendship. He ate and slept very near my seat, and I was always very officious to serve him whenever an opportunity presented itself. I was always the first to anticipate his wants, and testify my extreme desire to be useful to him. All these attentions did not go long unrewarded. I soon perceived that he regarded me with a more favourable eye than the rest. This was a great consolation to me; and to render myself still more worthy of his favour, I redoubled my endeavours to please him; in which I succeeded so well, that he at length never employed any other to assist him, and made me leave my seat to provide his meals for him, having been particularly well pleased with some ragouts I had already made for him. I was not a little proud of this honour, which, in fact, exempted me from my duty as galley-slave.

Our galley was ordered to Cadiz, to take aboard some masts, yards, and ship's tackling. Here a young lord, who was related to our captain, and a Knight of the Order of St. James's, came with his baggage on board our galley, intending to make his first expedition. He wore, as was customary in those days, a gold chain; but he had not been a week on board before he lost this. In vain was every exertion made to discover the thief; the chain was not to be found. Upon which the captain recommended his kinsman to take one of the slaves into his service, who should have the care of his chamber, and be responsible for everything, on pain of being handsomely flogged if anything were lost. The Knight

approved highly of this advice, and the only question now was, which of the slaves should have the honour of serving him. He had heard a good account of my address and capacity, and wished exceedingly to have me. Accordingly the captain called the commissary before him, and asked him if he was satisfied with my behaviour. The commissary, not knowing the drift of this question, enlarged upon my merit, and spoke so highly in my praise, that the knight from that moment resolved to select me. I was immediately sent for; he liked my looks, and I was enrolled in his service, to the great regret of the commissary.

Behold me now become a valet-de-chambre to a Knight of St. James's. That I might be able to serve him the more commodiously, the first favour he obtained for me was, that I should only be obliged to wear a link on my foot; after which, all his clothes, linen, jewels, and other valuables were told out to me, and given in charge to me, with the recommendation that it would be to my own interest to be faithful and vigilant. I put everything in such order that I could see the whole at one view. The servants were expressly forbidden to enter the chamber without my permission, when their master was not in it. This regulation saved me a great deal of trouble in watching these sparks, who were as well versed in legerdemain tricks as any of the slaves on board the galley.

I applied myself assiduously to study the humour and disposition of the knight, and it was not long ere I was beloved by him, and even esteemed, galley-slave

as I was. He felt pleasure in conversing with me, and I appeared to him to possess such good sense, that he sometimes consulted me on the most important occasions. One day he entered his chamber with a thoughtful and melancholy countenance. "My friend," said he, "one of my uncles has written me a letter which has put me exceedingly out of humour, in which he urges me, if I wish to be heir to all his property, to marry. He has himself grown idle at the Court, without having dared to take that yoke upon himself which he wishes me to submit to. I know not what answer to make, for I have no inclination at present for matrimony."—"Sir," replied I, jesting, "were I in your place, I would write word back, that nothing could please me more than to comply with his wishes, provided it were with one of his daughters." My master laughed most heartily at this advice, which was only meant by me as a joke, and declared that he would write those very words, which he doubted not would rid him of any further importunity.

CHAPTER LV.

GUZMAN FINDS HIMSELF IN THE MOST CRUEL SITUATION OF HIS LIFE ; BUT IT PLEASES HEAVEN SUDDENLY TO PUT AN END TO HIS TROUBLES, AND HE RECOVERS HIS LIBERTY.

I HAD every reason to be content with the life I led in the service of the young knight, who kept so good a table that I had frequent opportunities of treating my comrades; in which I should not have

forgotten Soto, notwithstanding what had passed between us; but this rascal, who had never forgiven me, took great pains to nourish my hatred by constantly speaking ill of me before my master's servants as well as those of the captain. These servants, who none of them liked me, listened to him with pleasure, and did not fail to report everything to their patrons; and, among other slanders, that I was only waiting for an opportunity to make some good hit, and that, sooner or later, the knight would know me for the rogue I really was.

Although imputations coming from such a source ought not to have been looked upon without suspicion, they did not entirely fail in making some impression on my master's mind, and I soon perceived, notwithstanding the implicit confidence he pretended to place in me, that he kept a strict watch over all my actions. On my side, without taking notice of his unjust suspicions, I continued to serve him with fidelity, keeping my eyes always open to any snares my enemies might lay for me. In spite of all my vigilance, however, I fell a prey to Soto's malice, who instigated one of the knight's servants to steal a piece of plate out of his master's cabin and hide it under my bed between two boards. I soon missed it, and told my master of the loss in a manner which ought to have convinced him that I was not the thief. But I was not believed, and it was at last found where it had been concealed. The captain, thinking that I had stolen it, in spite of all I could allege in my defence, condemned me to receive fifty lashes, but my master begged me off, on condition

abstractions of which I. no capable

that if anything were again lost, I should have no mercy.

Finding, by this adventure, that I had secret enemies who were determined to ruin me, I humbly prayed the captain and my master to take another in my place, and permit me to return to my oar, rather than be exposed to such another misfortune. My master misinterpreted my intentions, and, thinking that I was more desirous of returning to the commissary's than of continuing in his service, he determined to keep me whether I would or no. Patience, therefore, was my only remedy, and I stood as much on my guard as I could night and day, yet, watchful as I was, I could not escape. My master having returned from the town one night, sent for me to assist in undressing him. I gave him his gown and nightcap, and while I carried his sword and gloves from one cabin to another, some rascal stole the hat-band. I never could find out how this trick had been executed, but when I was brushing the hat the next morning, I discovered that the band was missing. At this sight I turned as pale a death, looked for it everywhere, but all in vain; there were thieves on board that galley at least my match.

Nothing was left for me to do but to implore the knight's mercy; but when I related my new misfortune to him, as well as the malignity of my enemies, to which I attributed it, he laughed in my face. "Mr. Guzman," said he with a sneer, "I am well persuaded that you are a person of the greatest integrity, although you have not that reputation on board this galley, and I have been told more than once of my

boldness in having trusted you. Once more I think you an honest man, and am, therefore, sorry to tell you, that if you do not forthwith produce my hat-band, you must be delivered over to the under-commissary, who will doubtless treat you according to your deserts. This you may rely upon, notwithstanding your protestations of fidelity."

This was the knight's answer, and the captain came up at that moment. As soon as he knew what was the matter, and found that I persisted in denying that I had taken the hat-band, he flew in such a passion, and beat me so cruelly, that I fell down half dead. To increase my misery, I was driven from the poop and sent to the last seat 'on the prow, the most uneasy seat of all, and that in which the slaves work hardest. In addition to this, the commissary had orders not to spare me, under pain of the captain's displeasure. This officer, however, really pitied me, and notwithstanding the orders he had received to treat me with rigour, allowed me to rest for a full month, seeing that I was quite incapable of hard labour.

I regained my strength by degrees, and no sooner had I recommenced my duty at the oar than Heaven, satisfied with the hardships I had already undergone, took compassion on me, and released me from my pitiable situation. Soto, who had a devilish design in his head, which he could not execute without my assistance, my seat being near the powder-room, became extremely desirous to be reconciled with me. With this view he availed himself of the mediation of a Turk, who had the liberty of going fore and aft

as he pleased in the galley; not doubting that I longed in my heart to be revenged for the cruel treatment I had met with, and that I loved liberty as well as others. He entreated me, through the Turk, to forget the past, and restore him my friendship, which he confessed he had justly forfeited. I pretended to be very desirous to be reconciled to him, upon which the Turk addressed me in these terms:

“Soto has charged me to communicate to you a project which he has formed to deliver us all. It is concerted that as soon as we reach the coast of Barbary, which we are fast approaching, we are to rise, cut the throats of the officers and soldiers, beginning with the captain, proclaim liberty to the rest of the galley-slaves, who will immediately assist us, render ourselves masters of the galley, and seek an asylum amongst the Turks. This enterprise has been in contemplation,” continued he, “upwards of two months. We have a sufficient quantity of arms concealed, all our measures are taken, and we have resolved to save ourselves, Turks as well as Christians, or perish in the attempt. All that is required of you is to blow up the powder-room at a signal given. This is our plot; and after the cruel treatment you have experienced from the captain, we have thought that you would not refuse to join us.” I replied to the Turk, that he might depend there was nothing I was not capable of undertaking to be revenged on the captain, and that he might assure the conspirators that I would do what was expected of me. This, however, was very far from my intention. When

the day approached that the plot was to be put in execution, I requested a soldier who came near my seat to tell the captain that I had a secret of the greatest importance to reveal to him. "But," added I, "tell him to send for me immediately; his life depends upon his compliance." The captain considered this as a trick of mine to reconcile myself to him, and regain my post in his kinsman's service; and though he did condescend to hear what I had to say, he resolved to make me suffer for it if I was only trifling with him. He sent for me, however, and I discovered all I knew; told him where the arms lay concealed, and named the principal inventors of the plot, at the head of which I did not forget to rank my friend Soto.

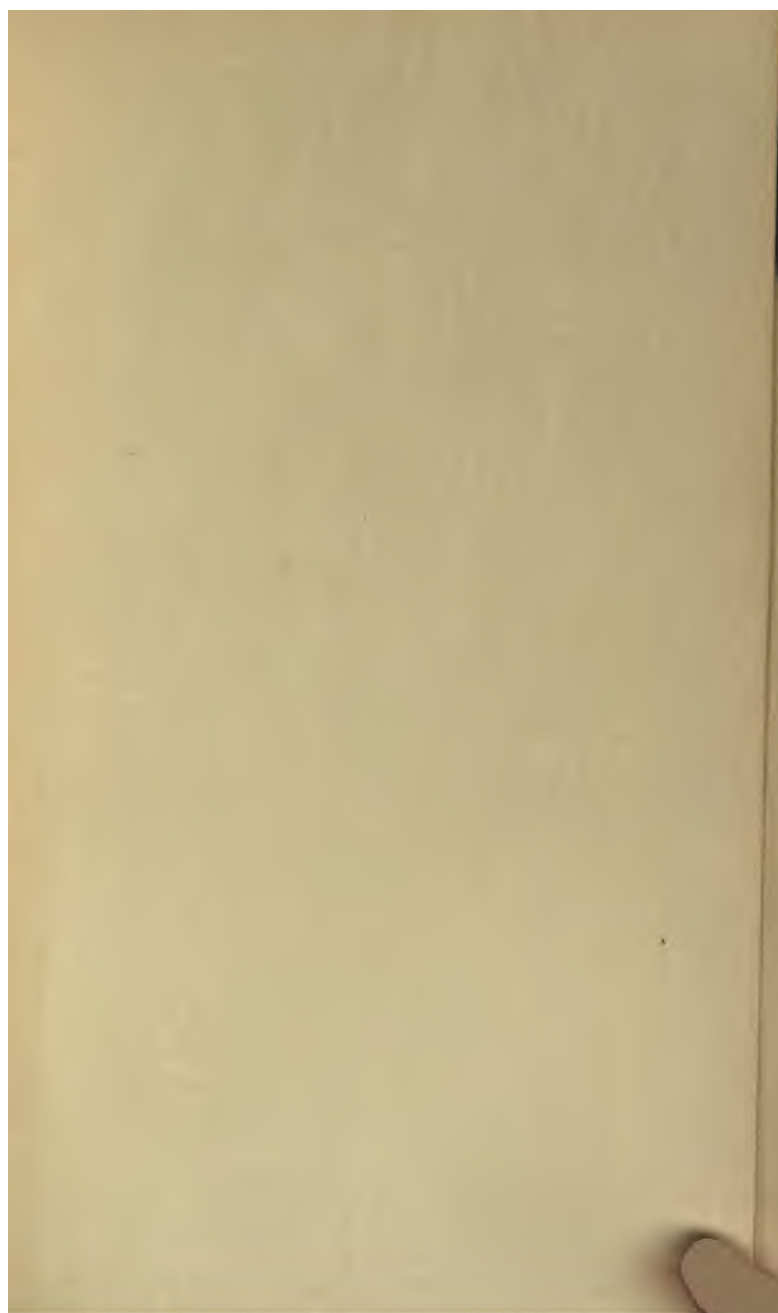
The captain, perceiving now that it was no trifling matter, resolved to proceed with caution, and ordering all the soldiers to their arms, commanded a search to be made, and found a vast quantity of firearms and other weapons in the place I had pointed out. He then caused the ringleaders of the conspiracy to be seized, who, being put to the torture, confessed all. Soto and one of his comrades were condemned to be drawn in quarters by four galleys, and the rest were decimated, of whom five were hung, and the others had their noses cut off. Soto, before he died, owned that it was by his contrivance the piece of plate and hat-band had been taken out of the knight's cabin, and that I was innocent of it. The captain commended me highly for my zeal and fidelity, after the unjust usage I had met with; asked my pardon publicly; ordered my irons to be struck off; gave me the

resonance among

liberty of the galley; and he and all the officers signed a letter setting forth the considerable service I had rendered the king in saving the galley and so many lives, which was transmitted to Court to procure an order from his Majesty for my enlargement. It were needless to state with what a grateful heart I returned thanks to Heaven for such a revolution in my prospects, promising to amend, and live better for the future.

Thus, friendly reader, I have given you an account of the principal adventures of my life. What followed after the king was graciously pleased to grant me my liberty, you may expect to hear, should I live long enough to tell you.

THE END.



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